The Role of Students' Green Mindset in Protecting Nature: An Inner Perspective

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Abstract

Generation Z, synonymous with the internet and cyberspace, is also concerned for the environment. This study aims to describe the role of students' green mindset in protecting nature in their fourth semester. This study uses a qualitative, naturalistic paradigm. Primary data was taken from participatory observations of 107 students in the 2020 and 2021 classes of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting study program and interviews with 11 of them. The results of this study were: (1) They have a growth mindset to protect nature; (2) The green mindset they have had has been implemented with actual behavior, namely holding deliberations with faculty-student organizations to protect the surrounding environment, educating elementary school-age children to sort out the trash around them, doing a simple campaign on the social media they have, writing green in online media, and carrying out actual actions in the field (planting plant seeds around the faculty and inviting

campus residents to collect cooking oil waste). Students' green mindsets should be cultivated by providing a green curriculum with several green courses to manage environmental challenges.

Abstrak

Generasi Z yang diidentikkan dengan internet dan dunia maya ternyata masih memiliki kepedulian terhadap lingkungan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan peran pola pikir hijau mahasiswa dalam menjaga alam. Penelitian ini menggunakan paradigma kualitatif naturalistik. Data primer diambil dari observasi partisipatif terhadap 107 mahasiswa program studi Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam angkatan 2020 dan 2021 serta wawancara terhadap 11 mahasiswa. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah: (1) Mereka memiliki *growth mindset* untuk menjaga alam; (2) Pola pikir hijau yang mereka miliki telah diimplementasikan dengan perilaku nyata yaitu mengadakan musyawarah bersama organisasi kemahasiswaan fakultas untuk menjaga lingkungan sekitar, sosialisasi pada anak-anak usia sekolah dasar untuk memilah sampah disekitarnya, melakukan kampanye sederhana di sosial media yang mereka miliki, menulis hijau di media on-line, dan melakukan aksi nyata di lapangan (menanam bibit tanaman di sekitar fakultas dan mengajak warga kampus untuk mengumpulkan limbah minyak goreng). Secara keseluruhan, pola pikir hijau siswa harus ditanamkan dengan menyediakan kurikulum hijau dengan beberapa pelatihan hijau untuk mengelola tantangan lingkungan.

A. Introduction

Experts divide generational groups not only by year of birth but also by socio-historical influences. Some experts initiate generation markers in slightly different years. A counseling-focused journal divides population demographics into the following groups (Kristyowati, 2021): a. Pre-Baby Boom (born in 1945 and earlier), b. The Baby Boom (born between 1946 and 1964), c. The Baby Bust (born between 1965 and 1976) (Generation X), d. The Echo of the Baby Boomers (born between 1977 and 1997)(Generation Y), e. Generation Net (born between 1998 and 2009) (Generation Z), and f. Generation Alpha (born in 2010-). These generational markers reflect distinct historical periods and the evolving cultural, technological, and social contexts that shape each generation's values and behaviors.

William Straus and Neil Howe developed the theory of generations by mentioning the characteristics of each generation that have been classified. Their thoughts poured into a book entitled "The Next Generation." With an American background, this book describes that each generation has different traits and characteristics due to educational background, age, environment, and technology, which exist in each generation are different. For example, the Baby Boomer generation, characterized by an adventurous and independent spirit, is different. Generation X's general characteristics are family-oriented and strong-willed. In general, Generation X started to know about investing. Meanwhile, Generation Y, or Millennials, became familiar with technology and love to spree. Generation Z or '*Kids Jaman Now*' (Prasetyo et al., 2024) has the characteristics of liking all instantaneous things, being very dependent on technology, and liking entrepreneurship. Since being born when technology was growing rapidly, Generation Z has had an indescribable impact on the older generation. Generation Z is very dependent on anything related to technology; they have used smartphones from a young age and keep needing internet networks in their daily lives. Generation Z's dependence on smartphones has created new social phenomena among Generation Z, such as increasing anti-social attitudes, feeling lonely quickly, and being addicted to gadgets and online games (Diva et al., 2020). In other words, Generation Z almost shares many traits with the Millenial generation, a narcissistic, entitled, lazy individual (Rohrich & Rodriguez, 2020). So, it is not wrong if the first mention of Generation Z is post-millennial (Dimock, 2019), namely, the generation that grew up with easily accessible technology (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018). One of the many benefits of Indonesia's constantly expanding information and technology advances is easy access. However, there are also drawbacks to these advancements, including criminality, extremism, sexual offenses, and other harmful behaviors that go against moral principles.

Therefore, Pancasila, as the official state ideology, must be taught to the younger generation. As an ideology, Pancasila requires all its laws to be followed in day-to-day living, even by the younger generation. It also serves as the foundation for life in society (Atar et al., 2022; Fraulen et al., 2022). This demonstrates how crucial it is for Generation Z to uphold the admirable principles of Pancasila in their social interactions in the age of globalization,

both in real and virtual space (Dewi & Najicha, 2022; Wijayanti et al., 2022). One is about how development is carried out while maintaining environmental sustainability. When we talk about nature and the environment, the big challenge in addressing environmental issues is the difference between a high level of concern and knowledge about climate change and a lack of pro-environmental action (Gifford, 2011). Some previous research shows that pro-environmental action is impacted more by similar values, political orientations, and personal experiences than by being exposed to scientific observations, such as greenhouse gas concentration or global climate models (Dessai et al., 2004; Gifford, 2011; Hamilton, 2011; Kahan et al., 2011; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Pearce et al., 2017; Pidgeon, 2012; Price et al., 2014; Weber, 2010). However, there is a lack of studies examining how environmental education can change or strengthen pro-environmental actions across different levels of society. Therefore, more in-depth research is needed to analyze how individuals and groups can be more motivated to take more concrete and sustainable pro-environmental actions, specifically for students in religious studies. The selected students are students in the 2020 and 2021 classes of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting study program, which is Generation Z, who live in Samarinda, and a generation that has personal experience in areas that are often inundated when it rains (Oktavianti & Fitriani, 2021)(Fahlevi, 2019)(Anwar et al., 2022)(Sulaiman et al., 2020) with the condition of the Mahakam River is less clean and lightly polluted (Nur Annisa et al., 2022). How they think about protecting the earth, conserving nature, and making a real contribution to its sustainability will be the focus of this research.

B. Methods

In the qualitative naturalistic paradigm, descriptive methods are used to understand social phenomena from an inner perspective, especially the process of events (Hayati, 2021). Marshall and Rosman (1999) state that qualitative research usually relies on data triangulation obtained from three methods, namely interviews, participant observation, and document analysis (document record)(Fadli, 2021). Primary data was obtained from the 11 informants with face-to-face unstructured interviews, preceded by observations of 107 students, as shown in Table 1, including 11 informants who were interviewed. Secondary data was taken from documents, books, articles, and other supporting sources.

Table 1: 107 Observation students and 11 informants

Class	Quantity	Informants
2020	52	4
2021	55	7

The observation occurred for one year due to students' consent. The class of 2020 students is a 'corona class' in their fourth semester, and they are doing offline learning. Researchers consider the class of 2021 to be more familiar with the campus and faculty environment after they spent their first two semesters concentrating more on Islamic boarding schools as a campus prerequisite.

C. Results and Discussion

Siregar (2022) asserts that the mind is the most crucial component in character development. Everything began with the mind, which is the source of all programming created from life events (Ramadhan, 2023). A person's moral principles, attitudes, and behavior are all parts of their character and are influenced by how they act and interact with others. Character, then, is represented in habits in day-to-day living.

Licona (1992), on the other hand, asserts that moral knowledge, feelings, and behaviors are the three connected components that show character. These three components help people develop positive thoughts, feelings, and behavior patterns toward God Almighty, other people, the environment, and the country. The character can be innate individually, but not by the national character. Character in a country is not innate. If each person has a strong personal character, the nation's character will also be strong. The national character must be established or nurtured in the younger generation as it is a crucial factor that defines the nation's strength. The younger generation is driving national transformation and is its owner (Noviani et al., 2023)Unlike confident leaders in the past, they were not involved in developing national character from the beginning. The younger generation is believed to be unable to strengthen the country if nothing is done to help them absorb and socialize the values of national character. Stated differently, character education holds great significance for them. Since character education has always been a part of human life, it is not a new program.

To think means to place awareness on an object until the mind moves to become aware of other parts of the object that it is aware of (Mulyadi, 2013). There are various ways a person thinks. Among them are analytical, synthetic, deductive, and inductive thinking. There are two systems of meaning in how people view the world: a growth mindset and a fixed mindset (Duchi et al., 2020). Attributes about the destruction of nature by humans with a fixed mindset are considered irreversible, while the growth mindset says humans can be turned into true guardians of nature.

Like it or not, the industry's 4.0 lifestyle has changed social life. Communication products based on digital artificial intelligence technology and cyber networks have changed social connectivity, political economy, and culture from face-to-face to forms or patterns of words and pictures. The impact on social aspects also occurs; the perspective of human interaction is considered to exist if virtual and wireless. The change slowly eroded social culture (Zis et al., 2021). While digital technologies offer benefits like greater accessibility and convenience, they challenge traditional social structures and raise concerns about the future of relationships, culture, and societal cohesion in a digital world.

Arguments about environmental challenges take center stage daily in scientific and popular media discourse. Not just because it directly affects human existence but also because environmental issues are becoming more prevalent, beginning with natural calamities brought on by environmental variables influenced by human activity and progressing to unchecked climate

change. Comparative analysis of the social and cultural mechanisms that the general public uses to learn about global environmental issues and the degree to which this knowledge influences individual and family practice changes are included in environmental communication. According to Hansen (2011), research on environmental communication over the past three to four decades has demonstrated trends and approaches that emphasize the media's and communication processes' narrowly focused role in society and politics while delving deeper into scientific, health, and environmental risk issues (Herutomo & Istiyanto, 2021). This trend emphasizes media's growing role in shaping public response to environmental challenges and the need for studies on effective communication strategies to engage diverse audiences in action.

Gen Z has contributed to the transition of preaching in Indonesia from conventional preaching to virtual preaching in the digital space (Kholis, 2021). So, one of the things that students of the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting study program must disseminate is the actual contribution of the practice of religious teachings as Muslims to protecting nature.

In general, the media is understood as a tool or means of communication that becomes a liaison between people, whether in the form of magazines, radio, newspapers, films, television, banners, posters, or various alternatives found on the internet. In his book on mass communication studies, Fajar Junaedi (2007) states that the media is understood as an organized tool to communicate openly in distant situations and in a short time to a broad audience. In this context, the media has the notion of mediation, which bridges the distance between ideas and empirical life (Sofia, 2021). Through this mediation, the media transmits information and influences how people perceive and engage with complex issues by shaping narratives and framing public discourse.

Table 2: Implementation of the green mindset of students

Informants	Sex	Types of Campaign
1	F	Writing about the environment at media online
2	F	Reel at Instagram
3	F	Reel at Instagram
4	F	Campaign on YouTube channel
5	F	Writing about the environment at media online
6	M	Socialization of waste sorting among elementary school children
7	M	He initiated his friends to plant seeds in the faculty area.
8	M	Invite campus residents to collect used cooking oil
9	M	Campaign at TikTok channel
10	M	Initiated his friends to hold deliberations with faculty-student organizations to protect the surrounding environment
11	F	Reel at Instagram

Data in 2021 said that five social media accounts with the most extended access rate, namely (1) TikTok, (2) YouTube, (3) Facebook, (4) WhatsApp, and (5) Instagram (Wangsa et al., 2023). From Table 2, it can be seen, without intending to do quantification, that from the results of interviews with students with a green mindset, they use Instagram social media more to carry out campaigns about protecting nature. They claim that this is the case since Instagram's capabilities facilitate the creation of campaign content about environmental preservation. For instance, when it comes to music as background noise that complements the available information, it can remind users—aside from Instagram—of the seconds and minutes that content can be submitted. This aids in increasing the impact of their messaging.

It is stated that social media has turned into an addiction for Indonesians, particularly teens because they have been exposed to technology and high-tech devices since they were little children, which has an indirect impact on their personalities. But the younger generation still owns the moral principles that permeate every facet of human life as a country and state, such as those that uphold justice, democracy, national unity, and divinity (Zeva et al., 2023). This research appears to allay worries that the speed and sophistication of technology could weaken the moral standards upheld by the Indonesian people.

This further emphasizes that Generation Z is an internet generation that uses social media to translate its ideas, including its green mindset. They use more audio and visual media to make their physical presence visible. Writing culture becomes a little less of their interest. In this study, the informants had not used TikTok as the most accessed social media and were not interested in using Facebook to build awareness of protecting nature. Findings in the field also state that Generation Z can be team-oriented and likes hands-on activities, but prefer socializing online rather than face-to-face. This demonstrates how they uphold nature as a type of morality that embodies Pancasila's ideals, particularly the second principle of just and civilized humanity.

D. Conclusion

As part of the internet and cyberspace generation, Generation Z still has a green mindset to protect nature proactively and mitigate climate change. Their green mindset must be supported by green curricula and courses in educational institutions because they know they have a responsibility to protect nature. This indicates that Generation Z continues to uphold the principles found in Pancasila, particularly the second one.

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