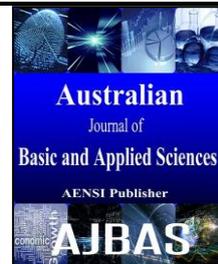




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Green Generation: Neo-Futurist and Technorealism

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ABSTRACT

The earth is getting older. Reforestation activity becomes very urgent to conduct. Some members of society, one of whom are new students of Communication Science of a state university in Madura island carried out this activity. They planted at least 3500 mangrove trees along the foot of Suramadu bridge. They documented this activity and shared it through social media. It is considered important for the new students to motivate other people to do similar thing. Yet, in fact this research shows that the students documented and shared their activity through social media because this activity is good to be shared, especially in social media which has become the fastest media to share personal matters. The interesting thing is that it is not only done by regular students, but also done by students who receive “bidik misi” scholarship. This phenomenon indicates that internet technology has been accepted openly by the students of “bidik misi” scholarship and regular students.

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Background:

A state university located in Madura island has just finished conducting the enrollment process for new students last August 2014. In this moments, they introduced the new students how to give positive contribution through reforesting the earth, i.e. planting mangrove trees along the foot of Suramadu bridge. This activity, which aims to invite students to be more aware to the environment around them, involved all new students including the students of Communication Science.

Basically, new students who just start their study in a university are like someone who just live in a new place. They interact with other students through communication. They communicate common topic with others. When the students share common things, then they can continue their communication to the more intensive one.

Nowadays, people live in the information era. Every day they deals every individual deals with technology. This is one of the characteristics of society who live in this era. They use communication technology not only for communication but also for other purposes. (Holmes, David, 2005)

New students especially those whose major is communication science is a group of individuals who cannot be separated from communication technology. It is because technology help them exchange messages with their friends. Accessing/using technology is quite costly especially

for students of bidik misi program. However, regular students also consider communicating using technology costly as well in considering the fact that they still do not have their own income.

This research is based on the importance of communication among the new students of Communication Science in relation with the media used nowadays especially the moment when they participated in planting the mangrove trees with the purpose of reforesting the earth. By taking part in this activity the students show their awareness to keep the environment green.

Discussion:

Internet and New students:

Communication media grows rapidly in line with the people's need in communication which has become one of the priority in their life. Human being is created as social creature. They cannot live alone, but have to interact with others. Interaction can occur through communication. Since communication is the basic need, people needs technology to allow them to communicate with others in short time and with not only to one person but also to many people at once. This fact bases the development of communication tools in our society.

The development of communication of technology which provides easiness to people in delivering messages is welcome warmly by members of society. Recently technology becomes favorite as

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well as the focus for some people due to the fact that it facilitates people to share messages. In fact, this phenomenon does not happen to all people in Indonesia. Still, it can be said that it happens to almost the majority of Indonesia people eventhough certain tribes in some region still use direct/face to face communication.

The easiness and rapidness offered by communication technology make people prefer to communicating using it to communicating directly. People feel easier and more comfortable when sharing information using technology. It makes them use the technology more often than direct communication. This trend causes the face-to-face interaction among people is getting fading. The irony is that sharing information through technology is more interesting to do than sharing information directly in real life.

This research indicates that among the new students of Communication Science, 66% of 107 students have one cellphone; while the other 34% have 2 cellphones. It means that all of them use technology as a media to share and deliver messages. Cellphone is not a new thing for them, especially those who own two cellphone.

In the information society, every individual experiences an increase in the interaction with computer screen. The develop face-to-screen relation instead of *face-to-face* (Holmes, David, 2005). It is noted that 100% of the research sample posses social medi *facebook* and 92% have twitter as well. From the 100% of the research sample, 89% put communication using internet as their priority; whereas the other 11% chooses other activities. This condition proves that Holmes' theory is applied to the new students. The new students consider that interacting through social media is more important than other activities which have no relation with internet.

Actually media has influenced the way people think, feel, and behave. Mc Luhan, states that media has been deterring people's life (Nasrullah, 2014). It is reflected on the recent society. The majority of the people accept the media penetration, yet they are not aware of the its future effect.

The new students, as part of the society who also get the advantage of communication technology, are people in the transition phase from senior high school students to university students who will be shaped to become a qualified generation. With their knowledge and skill, they are demanded to be able to interact with any level of society. The students as part of the society deserve to get more attention. Their characteristics as a generation who is capable of absorbing new technology makes them easily accept not only the media but also its content and both negative and positive effect.

"A key consequence of this development is that the mundane and routine find their way into the digitalized archive as people record and share day-to-

day lives, along with their personal preferences, political and religious viewpoints, and reflections events almost as soon as they take place". (Nasrullah, 2012)

As many as 107 new students who participated in the program of planting mangrove trees stated that they documented the event by using cellphone and other equipment. However, they admitted that exposing the event in the social media is not for the purpose of preservation. They documented and shared the event because they considered it a new activity.

Internet has connected millions of people from the whole part of the earth in a new space. It is implicated on the the way people see the sexuality, the forms of community, and even on self identity. In the internet era, when talking about virtual community, it is very possible that people take part in the interaction with other people from the other part of the world every time, even intimately, but it is also very possible that those people, in fact, have never met phisically. (Turkle, 1995)

1. According to official site of government, the program of "bidikmisi" is a program to help provide tuition fee to university students who live in a poverty and are unable to afford to study in university. It is different from the other scholarship given to students who have good academic record. Nevertheless, academic achivement also becomes one of the requirements to assure that the receiver of bidik misi scholarship have truly willingness to finish their study. (Information on www.dikti.go.id)

As many as 40 respondents of this reasearch are the receiver of bidik misi scholarship. They cannot be seperated from internet either. They also have social media and join the green activity to plant mangrove trees. Yet, they did not expose their activity to public for the reason of taking part in greening the earth. Sharing the photos of their activity in social media was for personal purpose. They spend more than one hour interacting with others through internet which means that they pay attention on the cyber world although accessing it needs money. The other implication that can be drawn from this phenomenon is that they ignore direct communication, or at least put it not in the first priority.

Research Method:

Approach and Object of the Research:

This reasearch is a descriptive study case which includes in public research. It applies qualitative approach. The object observed is the influence of internet especiallay social media on the new students' life who just conducted a reforestation by planting mangrove trees in Madura island. The unit analysis is communication using media, i.e. internet.

Research Subject:

The subject of this research is all new students of Communication Science in one of the states university in Madura island who participated in the activity of planting mangrove trees and posted their activity in the social media. The sample is all students who joined the activity, documented their activity, and posted it in the social media.

Procedure of Collecting Data:

The steps in collecting data were determining the aspects of communication using internet as the media, selecting the new students as the population and obtaining the sample which meet with the criteria. Data collection was carried out in one week by doing survey and distributing questionnaire. A semi-structure interview was done to support data analysis so that it can be done deeply.

Result:

Internet is a media whose penetration is accepted or welcome openly by the society. It happens to all members of society, even the new students. The result of this research proves that the majority of the new students, as part of the society, accept this media. Some of the people who learn about communication view cyber world important seen from their intensification in interacting in social media and internet. It happens to all students including those of bidik misi program. They cannot be excluded from the survey that proves that social media and internet get their attention more than others. Students who receive this scholarship are usually those who spend their time more to study as one of the requirement of bidik misi scholarship is academic achievement. However, the reality shows that such students are exposed with internet, especially social media for more than two hours. It

indicates that time is not important when they have already been busy doing things with internet.

This phenomenon occurred when they carried out reforestation program as well. They did not view this event as an event which is appropriate to be published as an effort to preserve the environment, but just as a new activity which was good to be shared in public. It is in line with Mc Luhan's statement that technology has been determining the society's life. They prefer doing activity which is related to internet or social media to doing direct communication with others. It means they do not realize that internet has separated them with social interaction. As a result, slowly but surely they will become neo futurist (Wilhelm, 2003). In fact, new students, both students of bidik misi program and students of regular program, should be critical in facing the development of communication technology to help share and exchange information among them. This is the generation of technorealism (Wilhelm, 2003).

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