



Empowering the Young Generation to Use Social Media Wisely Through Digital Citizenship Education in Dasan Geria Village

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Abstrak

Tingginya intensitas penggunaan media sosial di kalangan generasi muda tidak selalu diimbangi dengan kemampuan literasi digital dan pemahaman digital citizenship, sehingga meningkatkan risiko penyebaran hoaks, pelanggaran privasi, dan perilaku tidak etis di ruang digital. Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kapasitas generasi muda dalam menggunakan media sosial secara bijak melalui edukasi digital citizenship di Desa Dasan Geria. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan Participatory Action Research (PAR) dengan desain deskriptif kualitatif yang didukung data kuantitatif. Partisipan berjumlah 30 remaja dan pemuda berusia 15–24 tahun yang dipilih secara purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, diskusi kelompok terarah, dokumentasi, serta kuesioner pre-test dan post-test. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan statistik deskriptif, paired sample t-test, dan analisis interaktif. Hasil menunjukkan peningkatan skor rata-rata peserta dari 58,43 menjadi 82,17 dengan nilai $p < 0,001$ dan Cohen's d sebesar 2,61. Edukasi digital citizenship terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan pengetahuan, kesadaran, dan perilaku bermedia sosial yang bertanggung jawab. Temuan ini mengimplikasikan pentingnya integrasi edukasi kewargaan digital dalam program pemberdayaan generasi muda di tingkat desa.

Abstract

The high intensity of social media use among the younger generation is not always balanced with digital literacy skills and an understanding of digital citizenship, thus increasing the risk of spreading hoaxes, privacy violations, and unethical behavior in the digital space. This community service activity aims to increase the capacity of the younger generation in using social media wisely through digital citizenship education in Dasan Geria Village. The study used a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach with a qualitative descriptive design supported by quantitative data. Participants were 30 teenagers and young people aged 15–24 years who were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, interviews, focus group discussions, documentation, and pre-test and post-test questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics, paired sample t-tests, and interactive analysis. The results showed an increase in the average score of participants from 58.43 to 82.17 with a p-value <0.001 and Cohen's d of 2.61. Digital citizenship education has been proven effective in increasing knowledge, awareness, and responsible social media behavior. These findings imply the importance of integrating digital citizenship education into youth empowerment programs at the village level.



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INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has driven a transformation in social interaction patterns in society, particularly among the younger generation, a group born and raised in the digital era. The younger generation plays a role not only as active users of social media but also as producers of information that has the potential to influence their social environment. In this context, the concept of digital citizenship becomes crucial as a set of norms, competencies, and responsibilities that govern individual behavior in utilizing digital technology ethically, safely, critically, and responsibly (Ribble, 2015). Digital citizenship encompasses aspects of digital literacy, digital ethics, digital security, digital rights and responsibilities, and social participation in the digital space (Ribble, 2015). Meanwhile, empowering the younger generation through digital education aims to increase individual capacity to utilize social media productively, creatively, and oriented towards community development (Setiadi, et al., 2023). Therefore, digital citizenship education is a strategic approach in shaping a young generation that is wise in using social media.

Global data shows that social media use by the younger generation continues to increase. The We Are Social and Meltwater (2025) report noted that there are 5.24 billion social media users worldwide, with an average usage time of 2 hours and 21 minutes per day. In Indonesia, the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII, 2024) reported that internet penetration reached 79.5%, with the 13–24 age group being the most dominant user group. A survey by the Ministry of Communication and Informatics showed that more than 98% of Indonesian teenagers access social media daily, primarily through Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and YouTube (Kominfo, 2023). This high intensity of social media use indicates that the digital space has become an integral part of the lives of the younger generation, necessitating systematic educational efforts to enhance their capacity as responsible digital citizens.

On the other hand, the high use of social media is also accompanied by various digital risks. A national survey conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) and the Katadata Insight Center (2022) showed that 45.3% of adolescents had received false information (hoaxes) through social media, while 30.1% admitted to having experienced or witnessed cyberbullying. Found that low digital literacy was significantly associated with increased unverified information dissemination among adolescents. Showed that 62% of young respondents did not understand the importance of personal data protection and digital account security. This indicates that technical skills in using social media are not yet balanced with ethical and critical understanding in utilizing digital space.

Various studies have shown that digital citizenship education is effective in increasing awareness and positive behavior among young people on social media. Research by (Choi, et al., 2017) revealed that digital citizenship programs significantly contribute to increasing responsible digital participation and critical thinking skills among students. A study by (Jones, & Mitchell, 2016) showed that digital education interventions can reduce cyberbullying behavior and increase online empathy in adolescents. In Indonesia, found that improving digital literacy through digital ethics-based training can strengthen young people's awareness of security, privacy, and responsibility in using social media. These findings confirm that digital citizenship education is an important instrument in shaping healthy social media behavior.

In the context of rural communities, the challenges of developing the digital capacity of the younger generation are still influenced by gaps in access to information, limited mentoring, and a low understanding of digital ethics. Research by (Setiadi, et al., 2023) shows that digital literacy plays a crucial role in youth empowerment in the Society 5.0 era, particularly in improving the ability to adapt to technological developments. (Budiman, 2024) study of 220 rural youth in West and Central Java found that low digital competence is one of the factors inhibiting the participation of the younger generation in technology-based development. Meanwhile, (Raharjo, & Rofiuddin, 2026) through a Participatory Action Research approach emphasized that digital literacy education involving the active participation of village communities can improve residents' ability to utilize technology productively and sustainably.

This demonstrates the importance of contextual educational interventions tailored to the characteristics of rural communities.

Several community service programs focused on digital literacy have also shown positive results. (Widiantie, et al., 2024) reported that training on digital application utilization in Susukan Village improved the digital skills and creativity of village youth in producing educational content. Found that e-book creation training for teenagers in Semarang Regency significantly improved participants' digital literacy skills. Furthermore, (Rahman, et al., 2025) demonstrated that youth empowerment through digital training and the formation of an entrepreneurial community in Timpuseng Village increased the active participation of the younger generation in developing the village's creative economy. These results demonstrate that participatory-based educational programs can be an effective strategy for enhancing the digital capacity of the younger generation.

Although various studies and community service programs have addressed digital literacy, most have focused on technical skills, digital entrepreneurship, and the use of technology for community economic development. Studies that specifically integrate the concept of digital citizenship with efforts to empower young people to develop wise social media behavior in rural areas are still relatively limited, particularly in the context of Dasan Geria Village. Furthermore, most previous programs have not emphasized digital ethics, digital security, digital rights and responsibilities, and social participation as a unified competency for digital citizens. Based on these conditions, the novelty of this community service activity lies in the application of a participatory and contextual digital citizenship education model as a strategy to empower young people in building a wise social media culture at the village level. Therefore, this community service activity aims to increase the understanding, awareness, and capacity of young people in Dasan Geria Village in applying the principles of digital citizenship to achieve ethical, safe, critical, and responsible social media behavior.

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IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This community service activity uses a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach with a qualitative descriptive design and simple quantitative data support through pre-test and post-test measurements. The PAR approach was chosen because it positions the community as an active subject involved in all stages of the activity, starting from problem identification, program planning, implementation, to evaluation of results (Kemmis, et aal., 2014). The location of the activity was carried out in Dasan Geria Village with the main target being the younger generation who actively use social media. Participants in this activity numbered 30 people consisting of teenagers and young people aged 15–24 years, selected using a purposive sampling technique based on the following criteria: (1) domiciled in Dasan Geria Village, (2) actively using at least one social media platform, and (3) willing to participate in the entire series of community service activities. In addition to the main participants, this activity also involved village officials, youth leaders, and facilitators as supporting partners in program implementation.

The data sources for this activity consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through field observations, distribution of pre- and post-test questionnaires, short interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation during the activity. Pre- and post-test instruments were used to measure changes in participants' knowledge and understanding of the concepts of digital citizenship, digital ethics, digital security, information literacy, and wise social media behavior. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from literature studies, official government reports, internet and social media usage statistics, and relevant scientific articles. The collected data were classified into quantitative data in the form of pre- and post-intervention measurement scores, and qualitative data in the form of observation results, participant responses, and field notes, which were used to enrich the interpretation of the activity results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

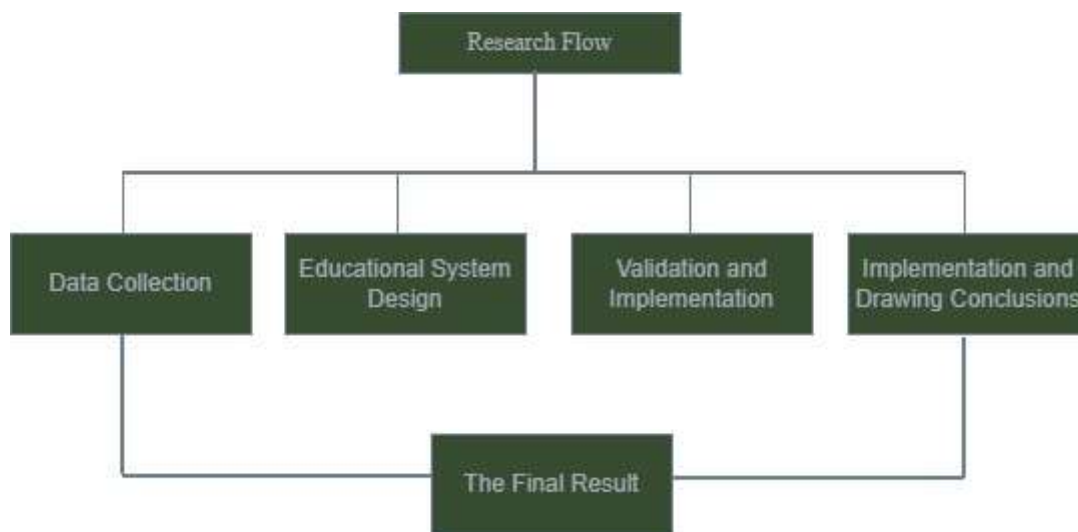


Image 1. Researc Flowchart

The community service implementation procedure involves four main stages: data collection, educational system design, validation and simulation, and interpretation and conclusion drawing. The data collection stage begins with initial observation and identification of participant needs through interviews, discussions with village officials, and a pre-test. The next stage is the design of a digital citizenship education system, which includes the development of modules, presentation materials, case studies, interactive learning media, and evaluation instruments based on participant needs. Furthermore, the materials are validated by digital literacy experts and education practitioners to ensure the suitability of the substance, language, and delivery methods. Following the validation process, simulations and program implementation are conducted through outreach, interactive discussions, case demonstrations, and mentoring on safe and responsible social media practices.

Evaluation of the program's effectiveness was conducted by comparing the pre-test and post-test results using descriptive statistical analysis in the form of average scores, percentage increases, and distribution of participant responses. Qualitative data from observations, interviews, and discussions were analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques according to the interactive analysis model of (Miles, et al et al., 2014). A triangulation process of sources and methods was applied to increase the validity of the findings. The results of the analysis were then interpreted to identify changes in knowledge, attitudes, and awareness of the younger generation regarding the application of digital citizenship principles in everyday life. The final conclusion was drawn up based on the achievement of the program's objectives, namely increasing the capacity of the younger generation of Dasan Geria Village to use social media ethically, safely, critically, and responsibly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The community service activity entitled "Empowering the Young Generation to Use Social Media Wisely Through Digital Citizenship Education in Dasan Geria Village" was carried out with the involvement of 30 participants consisting of teenagers and young people aged 15-24 years. All participants participated in a series of activities ranging from pre-tests, material delivery, interactive discussions, case simulations, to post-tests. The educational material focused on five main aspects of digital citizenship, namely digital ethics, information literacy, digital security, digital rights and responsibilities, and positive participation in social media. The activity was carried out in a participatory manner by involving village officials and youth leaders to support the sustainability of the program.

Based on participant characteristics, the majority of participants were female (17 people) (56.7%), while male participants were 13 people (43.3%). Based on age group, participants were dominated by the 18–21 year old age range (15 people) (50.0%), followed by 15–17 year olds (9 people) (30.0%) and 22–24 year olds (6 people) (20.0%). All participants were active social media users with an intensity of use of more than 3 hours per day. The most widely used platforms were WhatsApp (100%), Instagram (86.7%), TikTok (80.0%), and YouTube (76.7%).

Table1. Participant Characteristics (N=30)

Characteristics	Kategori	n	%
Gender	Man	13	43,3
	Woman	17	56,7
Usia	15–17 Year	9	30,0
	18–21 Year	15	50,0
	22–24 Year	6	20,0
Media Sosial yang Digunakan	WhatsApp	30	100,0
	Instagram	26	86,7
	TikTok	24	80,0
	YouTube	23	76,7

Note: Participants from more than one platform

The results of the descriptive analysis showed an increase in participants' understanding after participating in the digital citizenship education program. The average pre-test score was 58.43 (SD = 10.21), while the average post-test score increased to 82.17 (SD = 8.35). The average difference of 23.74 points indicates that the educational materials and methods implemented were able to increase participants' knowledge regarding the wise, safe, and responsible use of social media.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of pre-test and post-test

Variabel	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Pre-test	30	58,43	10,21	38	76
Post-test	30	82,17	8,35	65	96

A comparative analysis using a paired sample t-test on the JASP application showed a significant difference between participants' pre-test and post-test scores. The analysis results showed a $t(29)$ value of -14.28, $p < 0.001$ with an effect size (Cohen's d) of 2.61, which is included in the very large effect category. This finding indicates that digital citizenship education

has a strong influence on increasing the knowledge and awareness of the younger generation in using social media wisely.

Table 3. Paired Sample t-test Results (JASP Output)

Perbandingan	Mean Difference	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Pre-test – Post-test	-23,74	-14,28	29	< 0,001	2,61

In addition to improving quantitative scores, observations and group discussions revealed changes in participants' behavior and awareness regarding social media use. Participants expressed a greater understanding of the importance of verifying information before sharing, maintaining account privacy, using polite language in interactions, and utilizing social media for productive activities. Participants' active engagement during case simulation sessions also demonstrated an increased ability to identify potential digital risks, such as cyberbullying, the spread of hoaxes, and personal data breaches. These results confirm that a digital citizenship-based educational approach is effective in strengthening the capacity of the younger generation to become ethical, critical, safe, and responsible digital citizens.

Discussion

The main results of the community service activities indicate that digital citizenship education is able to increase the knowledge and awareness of the younger generation of Dasan Geria Village in using social media wisely, safely, ethically, and responsibly. This is indicated by an increase in the average pre-test score from 58.43 to 82.17 in the post-test, with the results of the paired sample t-test showing a significant difference ($p < 0.001$) and a very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 2.61$). These findings indicate that digital citizenship-based educational interventions are effective in shaping the digital citizenship competencies of the younger generation. According to (Ribble, 2015), digital citizenship is a set of norms of responsible behavior in the use of digital technology that includes aspects of ethics, security, information literacy, and digital rights and responsibilities. Meanwhile, (Choi, 2016) emphasized that digital citizenship focuses not only on technical skills, but also on critical thinking skills, social participation, and responsible decision-making in the digital space. Thus, the increase in participants' scores indicates that the education provided has succeeded in strengthening the knowledge dimension as well as the social awareness of participants as digital citizens.

The results of this study align with various previous studies that confirm the effectiveness of digital citizenship education programs in improving positive behavior among young people in the digital space. Research by (Jones, & Mitchell, 2016) shows that digital citizenship education can improve adolescents' ability to interact safely and responsibly on social media. (Choi, et al., 2017) also found that the implementation of digital citizenship education contributed significantly to increasing positive digital participation and critical thinking skills in students. In Indonesia, (Zahrah, & Dwiputra, 2023) reported that digital literacy training emphasizing digital ethics and security improved adolescents' understanding of healthy social media use. Similar findings were also presented by (Setiadi, et al., 2023), who stated that strengthening digital literacy is a crucial strategy for youth empowerment in the Society 5.0 era. These similar results indicate that a digital citizenship-based educational approach is highly relevant in addressing the challenges of social media use among the younger generation.

In addition to increasing knowledge, this community service activity also demonstrated changes in participants' behavior in utilizing social media. Based on observations and group discussions, participants became better able to verify information before sharing it, understood the importance of maintaining personal data privacy, and were wiser in interacting in the digital space. These findings support research by the Ministry of Communication and Information

Technology and the Katadata Insight Center (2022), which stated that low digital literacy correlates with increased vulnerability to hoaxes and digital security breaches. Research by Sari et al. (2023) also showed that increased digital literacy influences adolescents' ability to filter information and avoid spreading unverified information. However, unlike several previous studies that focused more on improving technical skills in technology use, this activity integrates aspects of digital ethics, digital security, digital rights and responsibilities, and social participation into one comprehensive educational model. This approach enables participants not only to understand how to use social media but also to understand the social consequences of each digital activity they undertake.

The main advantage of this community service activity lies in the implementation of a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach that actively involves young people, village officials, and community leaders in all stages of the program. The involvement of these various parties allows educational materials to be tailored to the local needs and characteristics of the Dasan Geria Village community. Furthermore, the use of interactive learning methods through case discussions, simulations, and practical mentoring has been proven to increase participant participation and engagement throughout the activity. The contribution of this research lies in the development of a community-based digital citizenship education model that can be replicated in other rural areas with similar characteristics. Practically, the results of this activity have implications for village governments, schools, youth organizations, and other stakeholders to integrate digital citizenship education into sustainable youth empowerment programs (Kemmis, et al., 2014); (Setiadi, et al., 2023).

Despite showing positive results, this community service activity has several limitations. First, the relatively limited number of participants, namely 30 people, requires caution in generalizing the results. Second, the program evaluation was conducted only in the short term through pre- and post-test measurements, thus not being able to identify the sustainability of changes in participant behavior in the long term. Third, this study did not explore the influence of external factors, such as family support, friendships, and technology access, on the effectiveness of digital citizenship education. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a larger number of participants, implement a longitudinal evaluation design, and combine more in-depth quantitative and qualitative methods. Future research could also develop educational models based on digital platforms or interactive applications to increase the reach and sustainability of youth empowerment programs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; (Miles, et al., 2014).

CONCLUSION

Community service activities through digital citizenship education in Dasan Geria Village have proven effective in strengthening the capacity of the younger generation to use social media wisely, safely, ethically, critically, and responsibly. The participatory educational program not only enhances participants' understanding of digital citizenship principles but also fosters awareness of positive behaviors in everyday digital activities. The younger generation is increasingly able to utilize social media as a means of communication, learning, and productive social participation, while also becoming more aware of the various risks that can arise in the digital space.

These findings confirm that digital citizenship education is a relevant and effective strategy for empowering young people at the village level. Integrating digital literacy, digital ethics, digital security, and digital rights and responsibilities into a single learning model makes a significant contribution to building a healthy and sustainable social media culture. Therefore, a community-based educational approach involving various stakeholders can serve as an adaptive empowerment model to improve the quality of digital citizenship in rural communities.

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