

Creating Happiness Among College Students: Psychoeducation Enhancing Civil Culture in Social Media

Author

¹*Reny Yuniasanti (Orcid ID. 0000-0002-6131-6258)

²Dian Sartika Sari (Orcid ID. 0000-0002

³Nina Fitriana (Orcid ID. 0000-0002-9906-1043)

Correspondence

^{1,2,3} Faculty of Psychology, Mercu Buana Yogyakarta University

*E-mail: reny.yuniasanti@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id¹

Abstract

Adolescents were excessively exposed to social media use especially during the covid-19 pandemic period. Social media helped individuals of the age group to express emotions through social media, ranging from writing statuses, commenting, to engaging in mutual derogatory conversations. Therefore, teenagers need to acquire information and be trained in displaying polite behavior on social media. This aligns with the spiral effect theory, which explains that when someone experiences impoliteness from others, they tend to reciprocate with impoliteness towards others as well. This impolite behavior would be an antecedent of low happiness in the millennial generation. This community service aims to provide adolescents with skills for polite behaviour on social media. The method used is online psychoeducation, with data analysis using paired-sample t-tests to measure changes before and after the education is given. The participants consist of 175 teenagers from Indonesia and Malaysia. The results of the community service indicate that psychoeducation enhances effective happiness and can reduce the culture of impoliteness among adolescents on social media. As a result, adolescents can implement the knowledge and skills provided to become wiser in using social media.

Keywords: Happiness, Psychoeducation, Civil Culture, Social Media .

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Introduction

Adolescents could not freely perform their usual activities during the social restriction policies due to Covid-19 pandemic. There were limited opportunities for them to experience face-to-face interaction as well as to hang out with their friends. Everyone, including adolescents, spent most of the daily life activities at home. Adolescents experienced loneliness and felt less happy because they did not have the opportunity to share or socialize with their peers. Subsequently, the intensity of using gadgets on social media remarkably increased.

According to Santrock (2012), one of the needs of adolescents during their development is to socialize. At this stage of

development, adolescents believe that they are unique and unsolvable, especially in terms of social identity to become an existential person (Santrock, 2012). Helmi and Pratiwi (2012), explained that having a social network account is one of the efforts to create an identity for adolescents, because this identity is important for adolescents to socialize. Social network is an internet-based social media application that allows individuals to interact with each other and build social networks that increase social capital (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In this case, gadgets have been thoroughly used by adolescents as the way to express feelings through social media, namely by uploading photos and videos, writing statuses, creating



contents, commenting on peers, and sometimes insulting each other.

The widespread use of social media is often not accompanied by providing ethical understanding or knowledge to its users. This condition becomes dangerous if it turns out that adolescents who often use social media accounts do not have sufficient awareness and maturity. Adolescents who tend to be vulnerable in the end access social media freely without knowing the signs and impacts (Gelgel, 2020). Considering the conditions, it is necessary for adolescents to get informed and be trained on how to perform politeness in social media. In fact, it should be very appropriate at a young age to learn more about the values and ethics of communicating both directly and on social media. Community development, which is also driven by technological advances, should be accompanied by an adequate level of literacy regarding these developments (Gelgel, 2020).

The emergence of this virtual version of social networking, affects relations between people, generally adolescents. Communication sites are made to fulfill individual desires to communicate without any space and time limitations. Not infrequently social networks often have the potential to influence a person's thinking patterns and shape individual personality (Raharja, 2019). This has been leading to higher urgency because according to the spiral effect theory whenever an individual experiences impoliteness from other people, he/she would also engage in impolite behavior towards others (Perason & Porath, 2009).

There are several impacts caused by impoliteness. One of them is the fact that impoliteness received from others will result in low psychological well-being in the millennial generation (Yuniasanti, Ain, Abas, & Hamzah, 2019). This is in line with the statement that happiness is one of the most important things for human life (Fitriana, Hutagalung, Awang, & Zaid, 2022). Happiness is also the goal of human

life. Therefore, happiness is important for students to be able to achieve success in carrying out their roles (Fitriana & Kassymova, 2021).

Meanwhile, research results stated that human happiness was generally at a low level. Happiness is characterized by high negative affect, low positive affect, and low life satisfaction. A survey conducted by the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics in 2021 stated that the level of happiness of Indonesians tended to fluctuate each year. The survey was measured using 3 dimensions, namely life satisfaction, feelings or affects, and the meaning of life or eudaimonia. The happiness index of the Indonesian population was 70.69% in 2017 and increased by 0.80% in 2021. Likewise, the level of student happiness also increased from 76.86% in 2017 to 78, 05% in 2021. On the contrary, the happiness index in Yogyakarta as the research context had decreased by 1.23% from 72.93 in 2017 to 71.70 in 2021 (Harijanto & Setiawan, 2017).

Based on this problem statement, efforts to build a polite culture to create happiness for teenage students in the social media era were very important. One of the efforts that could be conducted was psychoeducation. Therefore, the proposed solution to the problem was psychoeducation which provided understanding and learning how to determine behavior to achieve happiness in social media. In addition, the psychoeducation was designed to empower students in order to be able to show politeness and appropriate behavior in social media.

Pursuing this goal, Faculty of Psychology, Mercu Buana Yogyakarta University in collaboration with Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University-Malaysia, held an international webinar on psychoeducation. The topic of the webinar was strategies on enhancing happiness in order to increase politeness in social media behavior among students and millennials of Indonesia and

Malaysia. It was expected that students could behave properly in social media during the covid-19 pandemic period in particular and the digital era in general as well, in which virtual interaction had been becoming popular and unavoided.

Method

Type of Activity

The intervention was conducted in the form of an online seminar. Online seminars were the most feasible psychoeducation to be carried out during the covid-19 pandemic to reach millennial youth. In addition, online seminars were a kind of innovation in digital psychological interventions that was needed and suitable with the characteristics of the millennial generation. The benefits supported the idea to determine online seminar as the intervention carried out in this community service activity. The online seminar was chosen as a solution to the social restriction policy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Internet and technology allowed the participants from different regions, namely from Yogyakarta and Malaysia, to easily connect each other and to engage in the seminar. Participants were able to directly apply the materials they learned in the psychoeducation session. In order to enhance the goal, this community service program involved the following stages:

1. The preparatory stage, i.e., institutional coordination to arrange schedules for implementing psychoeducational activities, including identification of problems faced by students during the Covid-19 pandemic, identification of the number of participants involved in community service activities, and also identification of overall technical supports needed in the implementation of the program.
2. The second stage was implementation. It consisted of opening, introduction, continued by the online psychoeducation process

using zoom meeting platform. The activities were carried out online because of the Covid-19 pandemic situations.

3. Finally, the third stage was evaluation. A program will not achieve success unless there is an evaluation of the whole process. An evaluation is a series of systematic processes to find out whether or not the conducted training is carried out effectively, and efficiently, as well as whether or not the process achieved the goals. In this program, the evaluation process was carried out internally by the team and also externally by students who participated in community service activities in the form of feedback, pre-test and post-test.

Participants

The community service activity through psychoeducation in reducing the level of impoliteness on social media aimed at students from Indonesia and Malaysia. 175 students participated in this activity.

Model of Training and Measurements

This international webinar was a collaborative community service program between Mercu Buana Yogyakarta University-Indonesia and Sultan Idris Education University-Malaysia. The implemented program was in the form of psychoeducation. It was carried out using an online platform involving theoretical and practical methods that referred to the development of skills and character. The chosen method was an effective way to increase motivation, as well as to change cognitive structures, to modify attitudes, and also to increase behavioral skills of the millennials and the students. The online psychoeducation allowed participants to directly apply the material they learned in the theory session. To measure the result, a pre-test and a post-test were conducted before and after the program.

Results and Discussion

Results

The psychoeducation program was held on November 23, 2022. The program was carried out using zoom meeting platform. 175 students from Yogyakarta and Malaysia participated in the seminar. By the time the seminar was held, Indonesia still suffered from the Covid-19 outbreak. The psychoeducation was divided into some online seminar sessions. The committee invited an expert from Sultan Idris Education University (commonly known as UPSI) Malaysia as one of the speakers in the webinar. The event took place from 08.30 until 13.30 in western Indonesia time. The session started with singing the Indonesian and Malaysian national anthem, i.e. Indonesia Raya and Negaraku, and continued to opening speech delivered by Dr. Wahyu Kuncoro, the Vice Dean of Faculty of Psychology, Mercu Buana Yogyakarta University, and Prof. Madya TS. Dr. Mahizer bin Hamzah as the Vice Dean (Academic and International) of Faculty of Human Development, Sultan Idris Education University-Malaysia. Next the first topic was happiness in social media and continued by politeness in using social media. Finally, an evaluation was conducted at the end of the session.

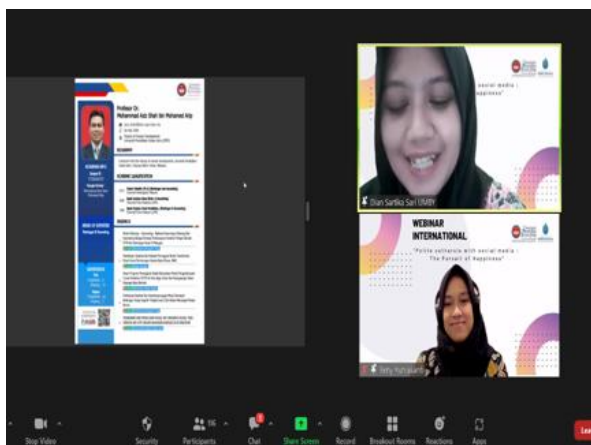


Figure 1. The moderator was reading the CV of the invited speaker



Figure 2. The psychoeducation delivery by the speakers

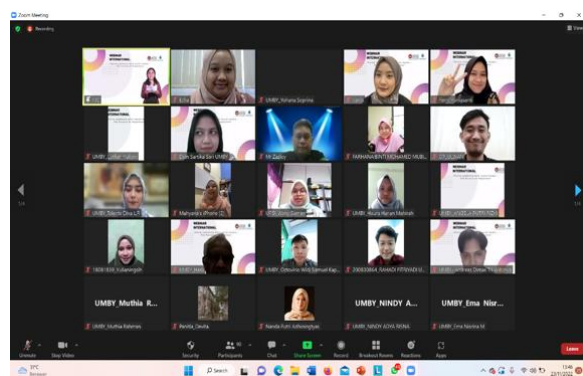


Figure 3. The screen capture of seminar participants

The result showed that the psychoeducation program increased happiness needed by students during the covid-19 pandemic which restricted social interactions among people. It was quantitatively found that there was a statistically significant difference between the politeness level of students before and after being given the intervention, namely psychoeducation in increasing students' happiness through social media. Psychoeducation to increase happiness through social media could effectively reduce student impolite culture with a significance level of $p = 0.00$ ($p < 0.05$). The results of the pre-test and post-test showed significant changes. The descriptive statistics showed that the mean (1.749) in the post-test (27.41) was smaller than in the pre-test (29.15). In conclusion, the training which applied psychoeducational methods increased happiness and reduced students'

impolite culture in social media during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

Table 1. t-test of pre-test and post-test

Paired Samples Statistics					
Pair	Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
		1	Pre-Test	29.15	175
	Post-Test	27.41	175	6.686	.505

Table 2. t-test of pre-test and post-test

Paired Samples Correlations				
Pair	Test	N	Correlation	Sig.
1	Pre-Test & Post-Test	175	.806	.000

Table 3. t-test of pre-test and post-test

Paired Samples Test									
Pair	Test	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
1	Pre-Test - Post-Test	1.749	3.982	.301	1.154	2.343	5.809	174	.000

Discussion

Happiness is very important for human life (Fitriana, et.al, 2022). It is also the goal of human life. Likewise, happiness is important for students to be able to achieve success in carrying out their roles (Fitriana, 2018). In other words, happiness is one of the factors that contributes to success. This is in line with some literatures which state that happiness has positive impacts on one's success (Fitriana & Kassymova, 2021). Students' happiness and positive attitudes are needed to build an image that school is not solely tedious or scary (Affandi, Saputra, & Husniati. 2020).

In the educational context, happiness is influenced by how students deal with new situations and adapt to these situations. This is in line with the statement that student happiness is influenced by how individuals adapt to new environments (Harijanto & Setiawan, 2017). Some of the problems that arise are related to feelings of sadness, fear, and anxiety as well as decreased feelings of joy and peace which are signs of unhappiness as indicated by an increase in negative affect and a decrease in positive affect. These signs are the exact opposite of happiness signs because happiness refers to high life satisfaction and positive affect, and low negative affect (Baumgardner & Grother, 2010).

Several data shows that users of social media often use and post inappropriate words in conveying ideas and opinions. Considering these conditions, psychoeducation which is aimed at increasing politeness to enhance happiness in students is effective. The psychoeducation process helps the students to behave politely on social media as well as provides learning opportunity for students to stay happy during the co-19 pandemic. This finding is in line with Kurt Lewin's psychological theory which explains that in order to change behavior, it is necessary to firstly introduce and know the desired behavior so that individuals and groups are willing to change their behavior as expected (Hidayati, Astuti, Yuniasanti, 2020). This means that behavior change can occur when there is a change in cognition through the provision of knowledge, so that an appropriate training is required, namely training to create happiness that can increase politeness in millennial groups and students on behaving and interacting in social media.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the conducted community service program, it can be concluded that training applying the psychoeducational method increases happiness and can effectively reduce the impolite culture of students on social media. In this case,



psychoeducation is really needed in order to break the chain of impolite behaviour as well as a learning process for students to stay happy and mentally healthy during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as in the digital era which highly contributed to the increase of intensity in social media use among millennials and also university students.

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