COUNTER DISCOURSE ON MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN GENERATION Z ON TWITTER

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Abstract

This research is motivated by the massive issue of mental health on social media, especially Twitter. Generation Z is the party most stigmatized for mental health issues. This research seeks to answer how discourse develops regarding mental health issues among generation Z on Twitter. This research uses a qualitative approach with virtual ethnographic methods. Generation Z netizens' conversations on Twitter were recorded using cloud-based software Netlytic. The research results show the diversity of discourse on mental health issues. This discourse shows that generation Z displays a counter strategy, namely leaving the dominant discourse on mental health. This counter-discourse arose because so far mental health has always been associated with dictions such as depression, anxiety, stress, and even suicide. To find a solution to this threatening dicton, they create a new discursive strategy by saying that mental health is nothing more than a matter of religiosity, espoused values, or seeking professional help.

Keywords: discourse, Z generation, Twitter, mental health

1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health issues have tended to be ignored (Wynaden et al., 2014). The reason, apart from the stigma that people with mental health often receive (Sickel et al., 2019; Maya, 2021; Sahara & Devy, 2021), is also due to the state's unpreparedness to deal with these cases (Ridlo & Zein, 2018). Mental health issues become increasingly complex when related to young people (Cocozza, & Skowyra, 2000; Wyatt, & Oswalt, 2013; Wynaden et al., 2014; Ningrum & Amna, 2014), especially those involving depression, anxiety, and suicidal tendencies. self (Dianovinina, 2018; Livana et al., 2019). According to the United Nations world health agency (WHO), mental health is a good state where a person can realize his true potential, can be able to work productively under pressure to overcome the normal stresses of life and the impact on the environment (Phangadi, 2019). In Indonesia, cases related to mental health such as depression which can lead to suicide continue to increase, with around 5.1% or reaching 11 million people (Riskesdas, 2018). Problems with mental health currently not only affect adults, but also young people, including generation Z (Phangadi, 2019; Rudianto, 2022). The 2022 Indonesia-National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) report states that around 15.5 million Indonesian teenagers have mental health problems (Margono, 2023).

Research conducted by Stillman (2017), the newest working generation born from 1995 to 2012 is the Z generation group, while according to Noordino (2016), generation Z is a generation that is attached to technology and the internet as early as possible. Generation Z is also a generation that has grown up with technology so that access to open information is also directly exposed to generation Z. Every year internet users will continue to increase in Indonesia. A survey conducted by the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers (APJII), stated that Indonesia will have around 210.03 million internet users in 2021 to 2022. Classified by age, the largest number of
internet users is in the 13 to 18 year age group, namely 99.16%. The second number is occupied by
the age group 19 to 34 years with an internet user rate of 98.64%. Then the final ranking of internet
users in the 35 to 54 year age group was 87.30%. Meanwhile, the number of internet users in the
age group 5 to 12 years and over 55 years is 62.43% and 51.73% respectively (APJII, 2022).

In the development of social media, Twitter is a platform with a very high level of usage.
Based on the We Are Social survey, the number of Twitter users in Indonesia will reach 18.45
million in 2022. This number is the same as 4.23% of the total Twitter users in the world, which
reaches 436 million. In 2022, Twitter users in Indonesia will increase by 31.3% compared to 2021,
namely 14.05 million. Twitter has also become a space for discussion about mental health issues
(Reece et al., 2017; Di Cara et al., 2023), including for generation Z (Tambling et al., 2023).
However, the use of Twitter as a social media for mental health issues has so far revolved around a
typology of impacts (Sudrajat, 2020; Rosmalina & Khaerunnisa, 2021; Yulieta et al., 2021), there
has not been much research investigating the actors who play a role in the process, production of
discourse about mental health, what is the process of producing this discourse, themes related to
mental health discourse, and what is the context.

This research takes the momentum of World Teen Mental Wellness Day, which is
celebrated every March 2. The aim of the warning is to normalize conversation and dismantle the
stigma surrounding teenage mental health problems. World Youth Mental Health Day also
coincides with World Mental Health Day which is held every October 10 (WHO, 2022).
Discussions about mental health are often an interesting topic on Twitter social media (Berry et al.,
2017; Susilowati & Sukmono, 2021). Using Netlytic software, this research maps conversations
about mental health issues from March 2-May 2 2023. Developed by the Social Media Lab
(socialmedialab.ca) at Ryerson University, Netlytic (netlytic.org) is a cloud-based text analyzer and
social network /cloud which aims to help uncover social networks from online conversations.
Netlytic has the ability to import data from a number of sources—including Twitter, Facebook,
YouTube, Instagram, text files, RSS feeds, and cloud storage (Meneses, 2019). For Twitter, when
Elon Musk took over the microblogging platform, crawling on Netlytic stopped (discontinuous)
effective mid-May 2023. This is because Twitter no longer provides a free Application
Programming Interface (API), which is a system that bridges communication between an
application and a server. The social network regarding mental health issues in Generation Z for the
period 2 March-2 May 2023 is presented in Figure 1. The Social Network Analysis/SNA is a
capture of around 2500 tweets. The number of tweets is a limit provided by Netlytic and Twitter as
a consequence of the free API.
The SNA above was formed after the researcher entered the keywords "mental health and generation Z". Searches on Netlytic can use the Boolean algorithm, namely using the conjunction 'And'. In this way, Netlytic will process huge data (big data) of conversations on Twitter with these two keywords. On this basis, during data processing, a number of tweets containing the words "mental" and "gen z" but not directly related to the mental health of generation Z will be excluded from the data. Apart from the SNA map, Netlytic also displays output in the form of tweet previews, distance, diameter and network density, as well as text analysis in the form of a word cloud. So far, research on mental health on social media has focused more on the impact of using social media (Pratama, 2020; Yulieta et al., 2021; Septiana, 2020). Similar results were also found in studies in a number of other countries (Bashir & Bhat, 2017; Nesi, 2020; Sadagheyani & Tatari, 2020; Verduyn et al., 2021). The most widely used approaches are quantitative (McClellan et al., 2017; Pratama, 2020; Yulieta et al., 2021; Septiana, 2020; Nesi, 2020; Sadagheyani & Tatari, 2020; Verduyn et al., 2021) and literature reviews (Bashir & Bhat, 2017). Research with a qualitative approach focuses more on digital aspects of activism through the use of hashtags (Berry et al., 2017), while research on mental health discourse conducted by Pavlova & Berkers (2020) and Makita et al., (2021) only focuses on the process discourse formation only. There has been no research on what discourses are formed regarding mental health issues and the context that surrounds these discourses. On this basis, to fill the research gap regarding mental health discourse among generation Z on Twitter, this research was conducted.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach. The method used is virtual ethnography. This research uses virtual ethnography, namely an ethnographic method to see social and cultural phenomena of users in cyber space (Nasrulah, 2014). The concept of virtual ethnography further deepens questions about generally accepted assumptions about the internet, as well as interpreting and reinterpreting the internet as a medium and channel for communication, namely "ethnography in, of and through the virtual" - or face-to-face interaction or in other words face to face becomes unimportant (Hine, 2008). In virtual ethnographic research, data collection through interviews or surveys can be replaced by existing collections/archives originating from information that is widely available in online forums such as internet forums and social media. On this basis, this research data is a collection of netizens' tweets extracted by Netlytiv for the period 2 March-2 May 2023 with the keywords 'mental health" and "generation Z".

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

At the start of the youth mental health awareness campaign period in March 2023, there were not many tweets touching on the issue. The Twitter timeline, which is usually busy with various tweets, campaigns using hashtags to welcome the momentum of commemorating certain days, this time is completely silent. This at least shows that awareness of adolescent mental health is still inadequate, in line with the findings of Swetaa et al., (2019), Rudianto (2022) and Nugroho et al., (2022). The only tweet about World Youth Mental Health Day 2023 in Indonesia appeared from the official account of the Student Association of the Department of Radiodiagnostic Engineering and Radiotherapy, Health Polytechnic (Politekkes) Jakarta II (@HMIJTR). The tweet simply informed that March 2 was celebrated as World Youth Mental Health Day (Figure 2). The tweet had minimal impression, because it was only liked by one person and only viewed 61 times, even
though it included the hashtag #teenmentalhealthday. Unfortunately, that hashtag was the only one, because no other netizens retweeted or amplified the hashtag

Figure 2. Tweet about Youth Mental Health Day by HMJTRO

Throughout the data collection period, the results of crawling discussions about mental health among Generation Z on Twitter fluctuated. A number of accounts outside the three main actor accounts in this research did tweet about mental health problems, but had minimal impressions. The @riopinan account, for example, tweets about the importance of mental health. He said: “I used to think that "mentally healthy" was just nonsense. Now I just feel really mentally down.” This tweet also had minimal interaction, even though it emphasized the urgency of maintaining mental health. The account @ramalia_RA said the same thing, which said, “What's important is mental health. So what's not important is just blacklisting from life.” This tweet suggests that in life, in order to avoid mental health problems, only things that are priorities should be prioritized, while other things outside of your main activities should be put aside first to protect yourself from mental health pressure. A number of other accounts also amplify the importance of mental health (Table 1), which intersects with physical health, mental health, and mental health that can be obtained if someone is proud of themselves without having to interfere with other people's achievements.

Table 1. The importance of mental health according to a number of accounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masobyyy</th>
<th>Harus kuat mental sama badan ini mah, karna kesehatan mental &amp; badan paling utama😊</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>everythingcutea</td>
<td>Pokoknya kesehatan mental yang utama, setuju?🎁 #hiduplagi #masadepan #kesehatanmental <a href="https://t.co/cb1MNhMqC4">https://t.co/cb1MNhMqC4</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanistytaa</td>
<td>Harus kuat mental sama badan ini mah, karna kesehatan mental &amp; badan paling utama😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvenirsemesta</td>
<td>Saya doakan orang-orang goblok pemegang jabatan menjadi eling, saling memahami antar-manusia, dan utamakan kesehatan mental serta pikiran. Amin.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another account, @hateflowerss, said that mental health problems are not only personal problems, but can also affect other people who are friends of people with mental health. He said: "True or false, people who have mental health either hurt themselves or hurt other people who are victims." The account @julieraa also stated a similar thing. According to him, "That's why it's nice to see people's lives wqwq but it doesn't improve their mental health. Eh, forget they are also ding like us."
Self-awareness that only oneself can maintain mental health was expressed by the account @diaryvaandraaa. This is due to the fact that awareness of mental disorders and awareness of the importance of mental disorders is still limited. Awareness of mental health is very important because mental illness does not appear like physical illness. For this reason, according to the @diaryvaandraaa account, it is easier to understand something you can see yourself regarding mental health conditions, rather than relying on other people's beliefs (Table 2). Increasing awareness of mental health not only helps oneself, but also helps society try to eliminate the bad stigma that arises from mental health. According to the @atlannaqueen account, what is needed is to make yourself mentally healthy first, then make your surroundings healthy. The method, as done by the @imyourhhh_ account, is by decluttering (tidying up), not only things, but also yourself. All three accounts agree that developing a better understanding of mental illness can allow people to recognize people in their lives who may be dealing with anxiety, depression, or other conditions that impact their mental well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Mental health statements for self and others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>diaryvaandraaa Doa ku tiap hari adalah mau segera disadarkan dan diberi kekuatan untuk berani melangkah menjauh demi kesehatan mental diri sendiri yang tercipta karena diri sendiri, mau mulai hidup baru yg nyaman tenang dan damai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imyourhhh_ beberapa tahun kebelakang sudah menerapkan sistem decluttering hiihiw demi kesehatan mental jaya jaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlannaqueen orang yang terlihat baik2 aja padahal sedang tidak baik2 saja itu hebat banget sih, apalagi dengan kondisinya yg bisa menganggu kesehatan mental tapi berusaha untuk selalu sehatkan mentalnya sendiri. masyAllah luar biasa hebat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the statements of a number of accounts above, it can be said that mental health can include self-realization of one's own mental health condition. Additionally, increased awareness may lead to a greater push for mental health advocacy. For this reason, based on the statements of the three accounts above, the articulation of mental health is determined by: 1) what are the benefits of mental health for oneself; 2) start taking steps towards this; 3) mental health is an ongoing process, which should be approached as a journey, not as a destination. This means that mental health means loving yourself as you are, not hating yourself.

Interestingly, mental health discourse among generation z (teenagers) on Twitter also includes aspects of religion, values and beliefs as a linear and interdependent trajectory (Table 3). The account @ SaidHamidi99 responded to the thread created by the account @urfaqurrotaainy stating that what creates a positive mood is sunlight which produces serotonin which is closely related to the holy book Al Qur'an. Especially Surah Ad-Dhuha. In its thread, the account @urfaqurrotaainy stated that in the Ad-Dhuha letter, verses 1 and 2 are stated: "For the sake of duha time and for the sake of the night when it is quiet." This at least shows a metaphor for two contrasting things: Duha time is a visualization of a pleasant phase of life. Bright, passionate, busy, while the night is the opposite: dark, fatigue builds up, and quiet. This contrast is what is visible to the eye in life, namely there is a happy phase, there is a depressed phase. There is an enthusiastic phase, there is a tired phase. There is a phase of being accompanied, there is a phase of being left behind. Life is just a change from one phase to another.
Table 3. Aspects of religion and values in discourse mental health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Username</th>
<th>Tweet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nu_online</td>
<td>Syeikh Ibnu Athaillah As-Sakandari dalam karya terkenalnya Matan Al-Hikam memiliki resep jitu dalam mengatasi salah satu masalah yang dapat mengganggu kesehatan mental. <a href="https://t.co/vgWAebTJpq">https://t.co/vgWAebTJpq</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarimusdar09</td>
<td>tapi menurut metafisika china, tahun depan, 2024-2043 logika saja ngga cukup. kita akan masuk ke periode 9, thn 2024-2043. masalah kesehatan mental makin parah. periode 9 era teknologi &amp; spiritual / wellness. perempuan matang kompeten akan banyak. <a href="https://t.co/RZMEwBth3m">https://t.co/RZMEwBth3m</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from religious nuances, mental health values combined with eastern nuances are also visible, as tweeted by the @sarimusdar09 account above. According to him, Chinese metaphysics is quite accurate in predicting the phases of mental health problems.

The diversity of mental health discourse, as previously explained, boils down to two aspects: how to deal with mental health disorders and then take the initiative to prevent them and how to treat them. As tweeted by the @padasariku account with the key to self-love, loving yourself is an articulation of keeping your distance from mental health disorders. Apart from that, always feel happy, avoid pressure from the environment, have a healthy diet, and educate yourself (Table 4).

Table 4. Health prevention statements mentally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Username</th>
<th>Tweet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Padangsariku</td>
<td>SELF LOVE. mencintai diri adalah hal yg penting banget untuk kesehatan mental kita Ada 5 jenis self love yg hrs kita lakukan utk diri kita sendiri: 1.Self Love Fisik Cara mencintai diri dg melakukan aktivitas yg bermanfaat utk.kesehatan fisik Lakukan : - Olah Raga Teratur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttailahP</td>
<td>Stres berdampak berbahaya. Kenali 4 dampaknya di video ini <a href="https://t.co/Sh4HF6W42">https://t.co/Sh4HF6W42</a>. Jangan biarkan stres merusak kesehatan mental Anda! #stres #dampakstres #kesehatanmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayukinatie</td>
<td>emang bener ya, pressure dan lingkungan kerja sangat berpengaruh dgn kesehatan mental mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booboobbbbbb</td>
<td>tidur malam tidak baik untuk kesehatan mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uchsiaseed</td>
<td>hi guuuys i want to let you know, kalau aku sama beberapa temen-temen yang kenalan di Himpsi malang angkatanku bikin provider mental helath care, alias bikin penyedia layanan perawatan kesehatan mental yang insha Allah affordable. <a href="https://t.co/5DgkIrSnXw">https://t.co/5DgkIrSnXw</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riveragapee</td>
<td>gw diet gak sebulan dua bulan tapi sering yoyo krm gw imbangi dgn gym selama tiga bulan terakhir ini. jadi emg gak expect apa2 soal bentuk badan w di hari yg fitri itu. dan ya emg berhenti bercengkrama itu cukup oke utk menjaga kesehatan mental gw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youthssfm</td>
<td>Mental health awareness Kurangnya kesadaran akan kesehatan mental di Indonesia sangatlah minim, edukasi mental health harusnya diajarkan sebab kesehatan mental sangat berpengaruh dalam kondisi diri dan juga kualitas kinerja seseorang. <a href="https://t.co/CzI8kdiCHI">https://t.co/CzI8kdiCHI</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although mental health conditions, for example stress, anxiety and feelings of sadness are part of everyday life, if these emotions persist, it is a sign of something more or a condition that requires professional treatment (Table 5). This was stated by the account @diemgoblok. According
to him, "having never been to a psychologist doesn't mean you're free from mental issues, sis. I think you need it. let's go to a psychologist."

Table 5. Discussion about care mental health professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>diemgoblok</th>
<th>belum pernah ke psikolog bukan berarti bebas dari mental issue loh mbak. kayanya mbak butuh deh. ayo ke psikolog👍 <a href="https://t.co/vsfJbJMZse">https://t.co/vsfJbJMZse</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rizckynugrahal</td>
<td>Sulitnya jadi stabil, mental illnes gak bohong loh kawan apalagi sudah rutin minum pun ada kekambuhan juga. Terima kasih psikater sudah mau dengerin radio rusak saat Konsul. Kalau lewat di tl kamu boleh kok nanya-nanya semisal kamu butuh psikolog atau psikater <a href="https://t.co/y3V4BnjMhN">https://t.co/y3V4BnjMhN</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TerapiPsikologi</td>
<td>Demi Menjaga Kesehatan Mental, Lakukan Kebiasaan Baik Ini Yuk #kesehatanmental #konselingpsikologi #konsultasipsikologi <a href="https://t.co/oQ5BjzthqF">https://t.co/oQ5BjzthqF</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. CONCLUSIONS

This finding is in contrast to the research results of Makita et al (2021) which found that mental health discourse revolves around 'awareness and advocacy', 'stigmatization' and 'personal experiences of having mental problems'. These conflicting results are natural, considering that Makita et al did not narrow the search specifically to generation Z. On the other hand, methodologically, this research is in line with research by Susilowati & Sukmono (2021) regarding the need to use large data-based analysis to understand the movement of mental health issues in Twitter. Based on the diversity of mental health discourse that appears on Twitter, it can be said that generation Z is displaying a counter strategy, namely getting out of the fact that mental health is not a personal problem, but there are aspects of religion, values, and even seeking professional health help to get out of it. the mental health problem. This escapism arises because so far mental health has always been identified with terms such as depression, anxiety, stress, and even suicide. To find a way out of this threatening diction, they created a new discursive strategy by saying that mental health is nothing more than a matter of religiosity, espoused values, or seeking professional help.

According to Baskaran et al (2020), a counter strategy is an action with the aim of creating awareness by getting out of reality. The reality of mental health is manifested in the form of a painful body, full of suffering, emotional and mental torment, and even stigmatized so that individuals cannot enjoy the world of work or life itself (Putri, Wibhawa, Gutama, 2015). In fact, in some cases, the reality of mental health is suicide (Salshabila & Panjaitan, 2019). Based on this premise, generation Z on Twitter chose other dictions to describe mental health, away from the rigid dictions that have been used so far. This manifestation of the banality of mental health is then used as the reason for generation Z to move away from very centralized medical terminology. This is in line with the views of Minges et al (2015), who state that in general, young people carry out escapism and counter the banality or challenges they face, and the media is one of the means that facilitates their counter efforts.

Generation Z's discursive strategy on Twitter regarding mental health issues is an effort to resist the dominant discourse that has developed so far. Dominant discourses like this provide a mechanism for making reality acceptable for certain actions (Miller & Rose, 1993 in Moss, 2017) and in doing so, they also exclude other ways of understanding and interpreting the world, as well as marginalizing other stories. that can be told. This dominant discourse disturbs generation Z. The dominant discourse revolves in the public sphere; individuals or groups interact with each other and transact points of view. Discourse is not a stable and consistent model of meaning through language, but rather a competition in building power relations within a certain historical framework (Arofat, 2014). The process of connecting individuals or groups, as stated by Tsing (2000), does not move linearly towards completely homogeneous conditions, but the actors, in the research are
generation Z on Twitter, develop networks of alliances and support or build power relations, and strive for configurations, a particular space in accordance with the construction of meaning it carries. All of this leads to a counter-drawing of the dominant discourse on mental health in generation Z, and making this counter-strategy the only discursive strategy to fight this dominant discourse. The findings of the counter discourse in this research are a new insight that mental health problems in generation Z do not only revolve around the dictions of depression, anxiety, stress, or 'healing'. This counter discourse can be an instrument for relevant policy holders to focus more on packaging mental health campaign messages for generation Z. The use of virtual ethnographic methods based on large data on Twitter social media is also able to fill methodological holes in research on messages in the digital world. The limitation of this research is the inability of cloud-based software to capture conversations more comprehensively due to limitations imposed by Twitter.

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