

Generation Z's Trust in Mainstream Media and Social Media in Indonesia and Lebanon

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Abstract: This study investigates Generation Z's trust in mainstream and social media in Indonesia and Lebanon. Using a descriptive research design and survey method, data were collected from 114 respondents through Google Forms in April 2022, including students from Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel (UINSA) Surabaya and participants from *@iCademy* in Lebanon. The research explores the critical role of mainstream media in modern information dissemination and social media as a powerful communication tool. The results indicate that while social media is widely used, mainstream media maintains credibility due to its verified information. The findings emphasize the importance of reliable information sources for Generation Z, especially in predominantly Muslim contexts where ethical standards and factual accuracy are crucial. These findings suggest that media organizations must uphold high journalistic standards to retain the trust of young audiences.

Keywords: Generation Z, mainstream media, media trust, social media.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mempelajari kepercayaan Generasi Z terhadap media arus utama dan media sosial di Indonesia dan Lebanon. Menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif dan metode survei, data dikumpulkan dari 114 responden melalui Google Forms pada April 2022, yaitu mahasiswa dari Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya dan peserta dari *@iCademy* di Lebanon. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran kritis media arus utama dalam penyebaran informasi modern dan media sosial sebagai alat komunikasi yang kuat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun media sosial banyak digunakan, media arus utama tetap mempertahankan kredibilitasnya karena informasi yang terverifikasi. Hasil studi ini menandakan pentingnya sumber informasi andal bagi Generasi Z, terutama dalam konteks masyarakat Muslim di mana standar etika dan akurasi fakta sangat penting. Temuan ini menyarankan bahwa organisasi media harus mempertahankan standar jurnalistik tinggi untuk menjaga kepercayaan audiens muda.

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Introduction

The current human need for information can be significantly met by the presence of media and technology. The rapid development of information and communication technology allows information or news to be quickly disseminated to the public, especially Generation Z. This generation, often referred to as the digital generation, was born into and is fluent in using the internet, giving them a unique way of consuming information. As a transitional generation, Generation Z bridges the gap between the previous and subsequent generations. They are characterized by being tech-savvy and spending an average of 9 hours a day on their phones (Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014). They demand attention to the diverse information needs of each individual, opportunities to provide direct feedback on the content they receive, active collaboration techniques among involved parties, modern and enjoyable methods, and consuming information that is easy to access and understand (Swanzen, 2018).

The development of social media as an alternative media for the broader community presents new challenges for mainstream mass media, as they must compete with social media platforms that can replace traditional sources of information such as television, print media, and radio. Mainstream media is expected to act as a social control amidst the spread of various forms of disinformation (Fallis, 2015) circulating on social media. It must continue to fulfil its role by correcting the information circulating in society. Reliable news reporting is crucial for the general public as a trusted source of information, providing accurate and truthful news.

The rapid development of internet technology has had a significant impact on Generation Z. A survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association in 2017 showed that internet use is dominated by males (51.43%) and females (48.57%). Additionally, We Are Social noted that Instagram is the most popular social media platform in Indonesia, with active users reaching 38%. Other widely used platforms include YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp (Widarini et al., 2019). This indicates that Generation Z is heavily dependent on technology, which greatly influences their lives. Social media has a dual

impact; on one hand, it can be a positive and productive tool, but on the other hand, it can be a source of hate speech, spread false information, and create verbal terrorism that induces fear and uncertainty (Mudjiyanto & Dunan, 2020).

The Edelman Trust Barometer Global Report 2018 showed a decline in public trust in social media due to the prevalence of hoaxes. In 2019, public trust decreased by 2% to 53%. However, this contrasts with the public's trust in journalists in 2018 towards mainstream media, which increased by 5% from a previous 54% (Widarini et al., 2019). Social media and mainstream media have fundamental differences. Social media writers come from various backgrounds, while mainstream media has a clear institutional structure. The prevalence of hoaxes on social media should encourage mainstream media to enhance professionalism and apply higher journalistic standards. Society needs reliable information sources, and the mass media can provide this through verified information (Mudjiyanto & Dunan, 2020). The discipline of verification and accuracy by major press media is an implementation of journalistic principles (Emeraldien et al., 2023).

The study of "Generation Z's Trust in Mainstream Media and Social Media in Indonesia and Lebanon" is essential due to the unique characteristics and media consumption habits of Generation Z. Examining Generation Z in both Indonesia and Lebanon is particularly significant due to the diverse cultural, social, and political landscapes of these countries. This comparative analysis can reveal how regional contexts influence media trust and preferences, providing a broader understanding of the generation's media consumption in different environments. Additionally, both countries have predominantly Muslim populations, making it important to understand how cultural and religious values influence media trust and consumption patterns among Generation Z.

Finally, the fundamental differences between social media and mainstream media writers, who come from diverse backgrounds versus those with clear institutional structures, respectively, underscore the need for this research. The prevalence of hoaxes on social media should

prompt mainstream media to enhance professionalism and adhere to higher journalistic standards (Mudjiyanto & Dunan, 2020). This study's findings will provide valuable insights into the factors influencing Generation Z's trust in different media types, contributing to a better understanding of media consumption and trust in the digital age.

Literature Review

The Critical Role of Mainstream Media in Modern Information Dissemination

Mainstream media plays a crucial role in providing accurate and balanced information due to its authoritative nature, clear organizational structure, and accountability. With the advancement of technology, mainstream media has transformed into more interactive digital platforms, making it easily accessible and widely preferred by the public. Traditional forms of mass media, such as newspapers, magazines, tabloids, television, and radio, have now proliferated into online mass media. Regardless of age, online media offers convenience and practicality in access (Mudjiyanto & Dunan, 2020).

Despite frequent criticism for its market orientation, mainstream media remains the primary reference for reliable information (Wulandari & Untara, 2020). However, the emergence of more independent alternative media highlights the demand for more critical journalism that is not influenced by commercial interests (Sulkhan & Akhyat, 2018). Mainstream media is often characterized by centralized power. Additionally, it tends to strictly monitor disseminated information and uphold existing social norms.

Christian Fuchs, in his 2010 research published in the *European Journal of Social Theory* titled "Alternative Media as Critical Media," refers to the definition of alternative media by Bailey, Cammaerts, and Carpentier. This study identifies several differences between mainstream media and alternative media. Mainstream media is generally large-scale, hierarchical,

and dominates public space. In contrast, alternative media tends to be small-scale, independent, and free from rigid hierarchical structures. Mainstream media often prioritizes popular issues that can generate profit. This focus on profitability sometimes sacrifices quality, depth, and innovation in content. Structurally, capitalist-oriented mainstream media companies typically have a clear hierarchy and generate revenue through content sales and advertising (Fuchs, 2010; Bailey, Cammaerts, & Carpentier, 2007).

Social Media as a Powerful Communication and Information Tools

Contemporary media platforms serve various functions, primarily as communication tools. Additionally, social media acts as an information source through multiple platforms, each with its unique utility. Technology and information benefit not only consumers but also producers (Mudjiyanto & Dunan, 2020).

In today's digital landscape, social media plays a significant role and impacts the lives of individuals for various functions, purposes, and benefits. It can be defined as an online means of communication, transportation, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected networks, communities, and organizations enhanced by technological capabilities and mobility (Asmah & Cyntia, 2022). In short, social media is used for interacting, socializing, and sharing information.

Digital spaces can be a platform for collective skill enhancement (Rahmatullah & Dwi Yuliati, 2022). According to Henderi, social media can be defined as websites that allow individuals to create public profiles, interact with other connected users, and explore other networks within a system (Rahayu & Rahmah, 2021). Moreover, social media serves as a platform for consumers to share textual, visual, video, and audio information (Untari & Fajariana, 2018).

The influence of social media extends to shaping behavior and various societal aspects. Its primary functions include: (1) The democratization of information, enabling anyone to create and disseminate content, thereby shifting users' roles from mere recipients to content producers. (2) Expanding social interaction, facilitating

broader social interactions via the internet. The forms of social media are diverse, ranging from social networks to content-sharing platforms. As of 2016, there were 88.1 million active internet users in Indonesia, with 79 million actively using social media, indicating a 10% increase from the previous year (APJII, 2016).

Generation Z: The Net Generation

The net generation, known as Generation Z, is highly proficient with technology (Nursa'adah et al., 2018). Unlike Generation Y, they are more open, less concerned with norms, and heavily reliant on technology from an early age. Stillman (2017) in "How the Next Generation Is Transforming the Workplace" emphasizes Generation Z's high technological proficiency. Noordiono (2016) adds that this generation has a strong appetite for new technology.

Members of Generation Z share similarities with Generation Y in their multitasking capabilities using mobile devices. However, their command of information and technology sets them apart from other generations. This is because Generation Z was born into an era where access to information, especially the internet, has become a global culture, influencing their values, perspectives, and life goals.

The digital age has fostered a strong sense of independence and a proactive approach to learning within Generation Z. They are not hesitant to seek knowledge independently without always relying on others. Furthermore, Generation Z is highly diverse and open to differences, growing up in an inclusive environment, which broadens their mindset compared to previous generations (Sekar Arum et al., 2023). They have a global perspective used to connect with people worldwide (Rastati, 2018). The Parent Survey (Sladek & Grabinger, 2014) states that 34% of Generation Z connect with acquaintances in other cities and 13% in different countries.

Additionally, the cultural context in which Generation Z has been raised significantly influences their behaviors and attitudes. The rapid pace of technological advancement has instilled in them a desire for instant access to information and communication. This generation's upbringing in a diverse, inclusive environment contributes

to their open-mindedness and acceptance of different cultures and viewpoints. These characteristics enable Generation Z to navigate and adapt to the complexities of a globalized world effectively. Their ability to utilize technology seamlessly in various aspects of life highlights their distinctive approach to learning, working, and socializing, setting them apart from earlier generations.

This research employs a quantitative methodology utilizing a survey conducted via Google Forms. Secondary data, including literature and previous studies, were also utilized. Referring to the well-established Slovin's formula, this study determined a sample size of 114 respondents from Indonesia and Lebanon. The Slovin's formula is applied here to ensure that the sample size accurately represents the population, thereby enhancing the validity of the findings (Yamane, 1967).

Methodology

The respondents were specifically selected using purposive sampling from second-year students of the Communication and Islamic Broadcasting Program (Program Studi Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam) at State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya, as well as course participants from the non-governmental organization *@iCademy* in Lebanon. This selection is significant due to their academic involvement in communication studies, which aligns with the research focus on media literacy and communication practices. The distribution of questionnaires was conducted throughout April 2022. The collected data were analyzed using frequency distribution, aiming to quantitatively describe the indicators. Microsoft Excel was employed as the primary tool for data analysis.

Trust of Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon Towards Mainstream Media

Mainstream media has undergone rapid development, resulting in a diverse array of platforms. Despite the growing popularity of social media, mainstream media remains a credible source of information for Generation Z. According to Mudjiyanto & Dunan (2020), mainstream media is still highly necessary for Generation Z. Journalists in mainstream media are generally well-educated professionals who receive special training in journalistic ethics and are often members of professional associations bound by a code of ethics. These journalists work to find, process, and disseminate information within an ethical framework, reporting facts and data. Mainstream media is still very effective in countering hoaxes and serves as a reference for accurate information. Essentially, information from mainstream media must be verified for its validity before it is published and consumed by the public, particularly by Generation Z.

The research focuses on active Generation Z users of mainstream media in Indonesia and Lebanon as respondents. The survey gathered responses from 114 individuals who use mainstream media in Indonesia and Lebanon. This type of research aims to describe the research subjects based on data obtained from the subjects and to test hypotheses (Azwar, 2000). The following are the sampling results from the responses of Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon:

Table 1. Mainstream Media Accessed by Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon

Country	Newspaper	Magazine	Online Media	Television	Radio	Total
Indonesia	1.08%	0%	84.95%	12.90%	1.08%	100%
Lebanon	0%	0%	61.90%	33.33%	4.76%	100%

This table presents the percentage distribution of mainstream media platforms most accessed by Generation Z respondents in Indonesia and Lebanon. The data is categorized into five types of media: newspapers, magazines, online media, television, and radio.

In Indonesia, the predominant media accessed by Generation Z is Online journalism media, with 84.95% of respondents indicating its use. This is followed by television, accessed by 12.90% of respondents, and radio, which is used by 1.08% of respondents. Notably, traditional print media such as newspapers show minimal usage at 1.08%, and there is no reported usage of magazines.

Conversely, in Lebanon, the media consumption patterns among Generation Z differ significantly. Online journalism media remains the most accessed media, though by a smaller margin, with 61.90% of respondents. Television (TV) follows with 33.33% of respondents, while radio is accessed by 4.76% of respondents. Similar to Indonesia, there is no recorded usage of newspapers and magazines among the Lebanese respondents.

This data highlights a clear preference for digital and online media platforms among Generation Z in both countries, with a particularly strong inclination towards online journalism. Traditional print media, such as newspapers and magazines, appear to have negligible influence on this demographic. The limited use of TV and radio suggests a shift away from conventional media consumption habits towards more digital and easily accessible forms of news and information dissemination.

The significant reliance on online journalism can be attributed to the digital nativity of Generation Z, who are accustomed to accessing

information through the internet. This trend underscores the need for mainstream media organizations to enhance their online presence to effectively engage with this audience. The comparative analysis between Indonesia and Lebanon indicates a similar pattern of media consumption, albeit with a slightly higher engagement with TV in Indonesia.

Table 2. Most Trusted Mainstream Media by Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon

Country	Newspaper	Magazine	Online Media	Television	Radio	Total
Indonesia	25.81%	1.08%	44.09%	25.81%	3.23%	100%
Lebanon	19.05%	4.76%	33.33%	42.86%	0%	100%

Furthermore, table 2 indicates distinct patterns of media trust in both countries. In Indonesia, the most trusted media platform is online journalism media, with 44.09% of respondents indicating their trust in this media. Newspapers and television (TV/TV streaming) both have the trust of 25.81% of respondents each, reflecting a significant reliance on these traditional forms of media as well. Magazines and radio have the least trust, with only 1.08% and 3.23% of respondents, respectively, indicating their trust in these media types.

In contrast, Lebanese respondents show a higher level of trust in TV, with 42.86% marking it as their most trusted media platform. Online media is also highly trusted, with 33.33% of respondents favoring this media. Newspapers hold the trust of 19.05% of respondents, while magazines are trusted by 4.76%. Notably, radio does not have any respondents indicating it as their most trusted media.

The data highlights that while online journalism is a commonly trusted platform in both countries, there are differences in the trust levels towards TV and newspapers. The higher trust in TV in Lebanon suggests a preference for visual and perhaps more engaging media content. In contrast, the balanced trust between online media and

traditional newspapers and TV in Indonesia reflects a diversified trust landscape among Generation Z. It is important to note that the higher trust in online media among Indonesian respondents may not necessarily indicate a distrust in newspapers; rather, it could be attributed to Generation Z's greater familiarity and comfort with online journalism media.

Table 3. Trust Levels in Various Media as Information Sources Among Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon

Media	Country	Very Trustworthy	Trustworthy	Somewhat Trustworthy	Less Trustworthy	Not Trustworthy	Total
Newspapers	Indonesia	17.20%	25.81%	22.58%	27.96%	6.45%	100%
	Lebanon	4.76%	47.62%	28.57%	19.05%	0%	100%
Magazines	Indonesia	3.23%	29.03%	43.01%	22.58%	2.15%	100%
	Lebanon	4.76%	28.57%	33.33%	33.33%	0%	100%
Online Media	Indonesia	4.30%	20.43%	39.78%	29.03%	6.45%	100%
	Lebanon	14.29%	23.81%	38.10%	23.81%	0%	100%
Television	Indonesia	16.13%	21.51%	29.03%	25.81%	7.53%	100%
	Lebanon	14.29%	33.33%	19.05%	28.57%	4.76%	100%
Radio	Indonesia	6.45%	23.66%	35.48%	29.03%	5.58%	100%
	Lebanon	4.76%	33.33%	38.10%	19.05%	4.76%	100%

This table presents the trust levels in various media sources among Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon. In examining newspapers, Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon exhibit markedly different levels of trust. In Indonesia, 17.20% of respondents find newspapers very trustworthy, and 25.81% regard them as trustworthy. However, 27.96% perceive newspapers as less trustworthy, indicating considerable skepticism. Conversely, in Lebanon, nearly half of the respondents (47.62%) consider newspapers trustworthy, with only 19.05% seeing them as less trustworthy. This stark difference highlights higher overall trust in newspapers among Lebanese Generation Z compared to their Indonesian counterparts.

Magazines show a different pattern of trust. In Indonesia, the largest segment of respondents (43.01%) finds magazines somewhat trustworthy, followed by 29.03% who consider them trustworthy. A smaller portion (3.23%) views them as very trustworthy, while 22.58% regard magazines as less trustworthy. In Lebanon, trust in magazines is

more evenly distributed, with 28.57% finding them trustworthy and 33.33% each for somewhat trustworthy and less trustworthy. The data reveals that magazines hold a moderate level of trust among Generation Z in both countries, though Indonesian respondents show slightly more skepticism.

The trust in online media exhibits notable contrasts. In Indonesia, 39.78% of respondents find online media somewhat trustworthy, with 20.43% and 29.03% considering it trustworthy and less trustworthy, respectively. A smaller segment (4.30%) considers online media very trustworthy. In Lebanon, 14.29% find online media very trustworthy, with 38.10% considering it somewhat trustworthy. The less trustworthy category stands at 23.81%, suggesting that Lebanese Generation Z places more trust in online media compared to their Indonesian peers. Even though Generation Z is more familiar with online media, they believe it needs to enhance its accuracy and trustworthiness. This aligns with Emeraldien's (2021) study, which found online media often linked to inaccuracy.

Television and radio also show interesting trust dynamics. In Indonesia, 29.03% of respondents find television somewhat trustworthy, while 25.81% see it as less trustworthy. In Lebanon, 33.33% of respondents find television trustworthy, with 28.57% viewing it as less trustworthy. For radio, in Indonesia, the largest group (35.48%) finds it somewhat trustworthy, followed by 29.03% who see it as less trustworthy. In Lebanon, 33.33% of respondents each find radio trustworthy and somewhat trustworthy. This balanced trust distribution in Lebanon contrasts with the more varied trust levels in Indonesia.

The analysis of trust in radio reveals that it is moderately trusted by Generation Z in both regions, but with differing levels of intensity. In Indonesia, the largest group (35.48%) finds radio somewhat trustworthy, followed by 29.03% who see it as less trustworthy. The very trustworthy category is relatively small at 6.45%. In Lebanon, trust in radio is more balanced, with 33.33% of respondents each finding it trustworthy and somewhat trustworthy. Only 4.76% of Lebanese respondents view radio as very trustworthy, similar to the

percentage that does not trust it at all. This balanced trust distribution in Lebanon contrasts with the more varied trust levels in Indonesia.

Furthermore, it is essential to understand the specific factors that contribute to the trustworthiness of mainstream media among Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon. The factors examined include the presentation of data and facts, the recognition of major media names, the reputation of journalists, and those who abstained from choosing any particular factor. These elements provide a deeper insight into what drives Generation Z to trust mainstream media in these two countries, highlighting the underlying reasons behind their perceptions and preferences.

Table 4. Factors Contributing to Trust in Mainstream Media

Country	Presentation of Data & Facts	Recognition of Major Media Names	Reputation of Journalists	Abstain	Total
Indonesia	80.65%	16.13%	1.08%	2.15%	100%
Lebanon	71.43%	19.05%	4.76%	4.76%	100%

From the table 4 we can see that in Indonesia, the most influential factor is the presentation of data and facts, with 80.65% of respondents citing this as the reason for their trust in mainstream media. This is followed by 16.13% who trust mainstream media due to the recognition of major media names. The reputation of journalists plays a minimal role, with only 1.08% of respondents considering this factor. Additionally, 2.15% of respondents did not choose any specific factor. This distribution underscores the importance of accurate and factual reporting in gaining the trust of Indonesian audiences.

Furthermore, in Lebanon, the presentation of data and facts is also the leading factor, with 71.43% of respondents identifying it as their primary reason for trusting mainstream media. Recognition of major media names is the second most significant factor at 19.05%. The reputation of journalists is more influential in Lebanon than in Indonesia, with 4.76% of respondents considering it important.

Similarly, 4.76% of respondents did not choose any specific factor. This pattern highlights that, while factual reporting is crucial, the recognition of established media brands and journalist reputation also play a notable role in Lebanon.

This analysis of trust levels in radio highlights the varying degrees of confidence that Generation Z has in traditional media sources in both Indonesia and Lebanon. However, the landscape of media consumption is significantly shaped by the rise of social media. As we turn our focus to the comparison of trust levels in social media between Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon, it becomes essential to understand how these digital platforms are perceived in terms of reliability and credibility.

Building on the analysis of factors contributing to trust in mainstream media, it is equally important to explore how Generation Z perceives social media as a source of information. Social media has become an integral part of daily life, influencing how information is consumed, shared, and trusted. The next subchapter will compare the trust levels in social media between Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon, examining the underlying factors that contribute to these trust levels.

Comparison of Generation Z's Trust in Social Media in Indonesia and Lebanon

In today's technologically advanced era, various generations are competing to utilize sophisticated technology. Social media is used not only as a means of obtaining information but also to facilitate school and work-related matters. The rapid development of information and communication technology in this era of convergence has led to a diversity of information and communication within society. This allows individuals to wisely choose which technology to use for their interactions. According to Van Dijk, social media serves as a facilitator in online media, strengthening friendships, and focusing on user presence in promoting activities or active collaboration between users and the provided content (Nasrullah, 2017).

The advent of digital media as a new media, with all its forms and functions, has transformed communication models and information exchange, becoming increasingly popular across generations. Social media has dramatically changed the established communication structure, shifting from mass communication to an internet-based communication era (Khang, Ki, and Ye, 2012). Social media has become a favorite, with its user base continuously growing. According to Mandibergh (2012) in Umaimah (2016:210), social media is a platform that facilitates collaboration among users through shared content.

Table 5. Trust Levels in Various Social Media Platforms as Information Sources among Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon

Platform	Country	Very Trustworthy	Trustworthy	Somewhat Trustworthy	Less Trustworthy	Not Trustworthy	Total
YouTube	Indonesia	5.38%	24.73%	40.86%	22.58%	6.45%	100%
	Lebanon	4.76%	23.81%	52.38%	14.29%	4.76%	100%
Facebook	Indonesia	6.45%	17.20%	36.56%	31.18%	8.60%	100%
	Lebanon	4.76%	23.81%	23.81%	23.81%	23.81%	100%
TikTok	Indonesia	6.45%	19.35%	36.56%	29.03%	8.60%	100%
	Lebanon	9.52%	14.29%	23.81%	28.57%	23.81%	100%
Instagram	Indonesia	7.53%	16.13%	48.39%	25.81%	2.15%	100%
	Lebanon	9.52%	19.05%	47.62%	23.81%	0%	100%
Twitter	Indonesia	10.75%	18.28%	37.63%	27.96%	5.38%	100%
	Lebanon	9.52%	23.81%	33.33%	28.57%	4.76%	100%

This table provides an extensive overview of trust levels in various social media platforms among Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon. This detailed analysis examines how YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter are perceived as information sources by young people in these countries. In Indonesia, YouTube is perceived as the most reliable social media platform, with 40.86% of respondents rating it as somewhat trustworthy, followed by 24.73% who consider it trustworthy. Only a small fraction, 6.45%, view YouTube as not trustworthy. This demonstrates a high level of confidence in YouTube's capacity to provide credible information among Indonesian Generation Z.

In contrast, the trust levels in Lebanon for YouTube are slightly different. Although 52.38% of Lebanese respondents find YouTube somewhat trustworthy, a similar percentage to Indonesia's, the overall trust in YouTube is slightly lower, with 23.81% viewing it as trustworthy and 14.29% as less trustworthy. This slight variation may be attributed to differences in the media landscape and content regulation in the two countries, as well as the varying exposure and digital literacy among users (Rahmatullah & Yuliati, 2022).

Facebook shows a more balanced trust distribution in both countries. In Indonesia, 36.56% of respondents find Facebook somewhat trustworthy, while 31.18% view it as less trustworthy. In Lebanon, the trust levels are uniformly distributed, with 23.81% of respondents in each category, from very trustworthy to not trustworthy. This balance suggests that Facebook's role as an information source is more contested and may be influenced by its history of data privacy issues and the spread of misinformation.

TikTok's trust levels in Indonesia mirror those of Facebook, with 36.56% of respondents finding it somewhat trustworthy and 29.03% viewing it as less trustworthy. In Lebanon, however, TikTok is less trusted, with 28.57% of respondents viewing it as less trustworthy and 23.81% not trusting it at all. This significant skepticism in Lebanon might be linked to concerns over the platform's data handling practices and its potential for spreading unverified content (Fallis, 2015).

Instagram enjoys relatively high trust levels in both countries. In Indonesia, 48.39% of respondents find it somewhat trustworthy, and 25.81% view it as less trustworthy. Lebanese respondents similarly show high trust, with 47.62% considering it somewhat trustworthy and 23.81% less trustworthy. The visual and interactive nature of Instagram likely enhances its credibility and user engagement, making it a favored platform among younger users (Alyusi, 2016).

Twitter exhibits the highest level of skepticism among Indonesian respondents, with 27.96% considering it less trustworthy and 5.38% not trusting it at all. However, 37.63% still find it somewhat trustworthy. In Lebanon, Twitter has a more balanced trust distribution, with 33.33% finding it somewhat trustworthy and

28.57% viewing it as less trustworthy. The platform's real-time information flow and use by public figures and institutions can influence its perceived reliability (Emeraldien et al., 2023).

Overall, the analysis reveals that while common patterns exist in how Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon perceive social media platforms, significant differences also arise. YouTube and Instagram are generally more trusted in both countries, whereas Facebook and Twitter exhibit more varied trust levels. TikTok is notably less trusted in Lebanon compared to Indonesia.

Tabel 6. Factors Contributing to Trust in Social Media among Generation Z in Indonesia and Lebanon

Country	Originality	Balanced Information	No Other Media Posting (Exclusivity)	The Content Creator	Total
Indonesia	21.51%	56.99%	9.68%	11.83%	100%
Lebanon	9.52%	52.38%	33.33%	4.76%	100%

This table highlights the factors contributing to trust in social media among Generation Z respondents from Indonesia and Lebanon. In Indonesia, the predominant factor influencing trust in social media is the balance of information, with 56.99% of respondents identifying this as crucial. This indicates that Generation Z in Indonesia highly values information that aligns with or is verified by traditional media sources, reflecting a need for credibility and authenticity. Such findings are consistent with the research of Mudjiyanto and Dunan (2020), who emphasized the role of traditional media in validating social media content.

Originality is the second most significant factor in Indonesia, with 21.51% of respondents valuing unique and original content. This suggests that Indonesian Generation Z appreciates fresh and innovative posts, which are perceived as more trustworthy due to their apparent authenticity and lower likelihood of being manipulated or copied. Additionally, 11.83% of respondents are influenced by content

creators, highlighting the significant role social media personalities play in shaping trust and engagement on these platforms.

In Lebanon, the factors contributing to trust are somewhat different. The balanced information from official media sources is still important, with 52.38% of respondents citing this factor, similar to the pattern observed in Indonesia. However, exclusivity (no other media posting the same content) is a more critical factor in Lebanon, with 33.33% of respondents considering it important. This indicates a higher concern for content exclusivity and a desire to avoid redundant information, which might be due to a more skeptical view of media saturation and repetition.

The influence of content creators is significantly lower in Lebanon, with only 4.76% of respondents identifying this as a trust factor. This could reflect cultural differences in how social media influencers are perceived or the overall impact of individual personalities on trust in social media content. The originality of the content is also less significant in Lebanon, with only 9.52% of respondents valuing it, contrasting with the higher importance placed on this factor in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the trust levels of Generation Z in mainstream and social media in Indonesia and Lebanon. Despite the increasing reliance on social media for information, mainstream media continues to play a crucial role in delivering verified and credible news. This is particularly important in countries with large Muslim populations like Indonesia and Lebanon, where ethical standards and factual accuracy in media are essential. Mainstream media's structured approach and professional journalistic practices ensure that the information disseminated is reliable, thereby maintaining the trust of Generation Z.

This research underscores the critical need for media literacy among young Muslims, highlighting the importance of critically evaluating information sources. Understanding the factors that influence media trust allows media organizations to better cater to

Generation Z, ensuring they provide content that is both engaging and trustworthy. These insights are vital for enhancing the role of media in fostering informed and ethical communities in Muslim-majority regions.

Conducted in April 2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic, this study offers a snapshot of media trust dynamics during a time of rapid change in media consumption habits. It is noteworthy that at the time of the research, TikTok was not as dominant as it is today. This context is crucial for interpreting the findings and suggests that future research might reveal different trust dynamics, with TikTok potentially playing a more significant role.

As we move forward, it is imperative for media organizations to continue upholding high journalistic standards to retain the trust of young audiences. The balance of accurate and factual reporting, combined with the ability to engage users through innovative and original content, will be key to maintaining credibility, especially in the context of evolving media landscapes and technological advancements.

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