

Connecting Across Borders: Exploring the Role of Social Networking Platforms in Facilitating International Friendships Without Face-to-Face Interaction Through Instagram

Reza Abdillah

Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia
reza.abdillah@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id

Rizal Madani

Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia
rizal.madani@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id

Risas Daud Ibrahim

Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia
risasd@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id

Muhammad Naufal Fikri

Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia
naufal.fikri@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id

Abstract

In today's digital world and with advances in technology, social networking platforms are an important tool for finding relationships or relationships between individuals on a national to international scale. This study aims to examine the role of social networks in providing face-to-face interactions between individuals on an international scale. We conducted this research by collecting literature that discussed this before. The results of this study provide an in-depth understanding of how social networking platforms help expand social networks beyond national boundaries and how international friendships are formed from interactions that occur in social networks. With this research, it can make an important contribution to our understanding to create new opportunities in exchanging information about culture and friendship across countries through social networks that facilitate social connections that cross geographical boundaries.

Keywords: Social Network, Social, International Scale.

1. Introduction

In the current era of globalization, easy access to information, news, and interaction through social networking sites has become more convenient with the use of gadgets (boyd & Ellison, 2007). The development of communication technology, from postal services to public telephones and smartphones, has significantly transformed our way of communication (Castells, 2009). Communication has become an integral part of our daily lives. Social networking sites, as a form of internet-based communication, play a crucial role in facilitating international interactions and friendships (Donath & Boyd, 2004). The positive impact of social networking sites is evident from the increasing number of new users each year. These platforms not only enable us to connect with people from around the world but also make it easy to add new friends (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social networking sites offer various benefits, such as the ability to communicate with idols without direct meetings and assisting students in finding the information they need (Donath & Boyd, 2004). Instagram, as one of the most popular social networking sites, allows users from different countries to interact and connect with each other (boyd & Ellison, 2007). With the presence of social networking sites, communication and friendship have become easier in the era of globalization, allowing people to obtain information about other countries without physical travel and establish friendships with individuals from diverse nations (Castells, 2009).

2. Literature Review

A. Social networking

A type of social contact that takes place online is known as social networking. Users may connect with individuals from all over the world through social networking, and they can quickly and simply exchange information, photographs, videos, and opinions. Online platforms like websites, social apps, or social media can be used for social networking.

B. Cross-national interactions and friendships facilitated by social networking

Social networking has made international connections and interactions possible more quickly and easily. People may quickly locate and communicate with people from various nations through social networking. Here are a few strategies for using social media to promote connections between nations:

- **Discover and Join International Groups or Communities:** On social networking sites, users may join a variety of groups or communities based on particular interests or pastimes. Users may look for and join groups that are relevant to their hobbies or interests, where they can communicate with others from other countries who have similar interests.
- **Use location-based search features:** A few social networking networks provide this function. These qualities can be used by users to locate individuals from particular nations or areas. Users may start talks and make friends by looking for people who live in the target nation.
- **Follow Pages or Accounts from Other Countries:** There are several social networking accounts or pages that represent other nations. Users may follow these accounts or pages to learn more about the history, customs, and other intriguing details of that nation. Users may make new acquaintances by interacting with other followers and account owners.
- **Join Global Discussions or Forums:** Social networking sites also include discussion areas or forums that address particular issues. Users can take part in worldwide debates or forums covering current events, culture, and other interesting subjects. Users may communicate with people from other nations and widen their buddy network through these chats.

The advantages of cross-national connections and friendships made possible through social networking include:

- **Increased Cultural Tolerance and Understanding:** Interacting with individuals from other nations enables users to better comprehend various cultures, customs, and values. This can improve cross-cultural tolerance, appreciation, and respect.
- **Opportunities to acquire Languages and Cultures:** Interacting with people who speak a language natively can assist learners of that language acquire it more quickly. Users can also develop a greater grasp of that nation's culture and way of life.
- **Opportunities for Global Networking:** Through social networking, people may create large global networks. These networks may be helpful in a variety of areas, including international project partnerships, jobs, and education.

C. Using Instagram as a Social Networking Platform to Make Friends Around the World

Instagram is a well-known social media site that people use to connect with others globally and make friends. Users may submit, view, and engage with other users' content on Instagram, a picture and video sharing app. Users may quickly locate and communicate with people from various countries using Instagram. Here are some tools and techniques you may use to locate international friends on Instagram:

- Instagram has a location-based search tool that enables users to look for posts or other users in a particular nation or area. people may use this function to look for people from the nation of their choice and start conversations with them.
- Instagram users can use hashtags that are distinctive to certain nations or cultures. Users can find posts and other users who have connections to or interests in that nation by utilizing hashtags that are appropriate.
- Users can follow Instagram pages or accounts that are related to a specific nation. These articles or pages often provide information about the people, places, food, and daily life of that nation. people may communicate with other people who have similar interests by following these accounts or pages and learn more detailed insights and information about the nation.
- Through the Direct Message (DM) function: Instagram users may send private messages to other users using the Direct Message function. Users may start talks with people from different nations using Direct Message and develop connections with them (Meilinda, 2018).

Users may broaden their social network, exchange stories, and learn about various cultures using Instagram. Instagram is a social networking tool that promotes international connections and useful and pleasurable interactions.

3. Research Methotology

The research methodology is the way how research is carried out. In general, there are two research methods: quantitative methods and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods are usually used to make measurements while qualitative methods are more exploratory research methods. Qualitative method can be done in two ways, namely literature study or literature review and field study. Meanwhile, according to Sari, Siswati, Suparto, and Azizah the research

methodology is the steps of how the researcher collects data or information and investigates the data or information that has been obtained.

According to the Knopf (Knopf, 2006) literature review is the activity of summarizing the body of writing for a topic. The literature review summarizes various sources related to the topic being discussed. Literature review can be done at the beginning of a study or it can be the ultimate goal of a study. Literature review can answer problems theoretically and practically. Synder (Snyder, 2019) submitted that literature review has a very important role in research. Literature review can be the basis for developing knowledge, creating directions and policies, and if done well can create new ideas and directions for a particular field.

The method used in this research is descriptive method. This research is a qualitative type research by applying literature study. Literature study is used to build concepts or theories related to the role of social networks in friendship between countries. In conducting research, a problem formulation will be made as previously stated. Then there will be a collection of literary sources. The sources that can be used are books, scientific journals, proceedings, and other relevant sources. After that, interpretation is carried out from the study sources that have been collected to produce information or knowledge.

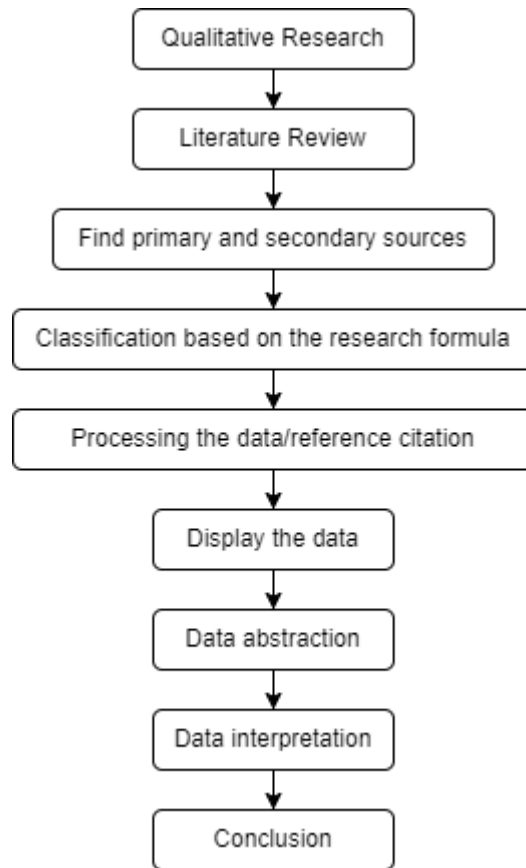


Figure 1 Literature review method

4. Result and Discussion

According to research conducted by Collin, Rahilly, Richardson, & Third (Collin et al., 2011) the use of social networking services is very important in strengthening and developing relationships or relationships, especially as a result of the merging of the online and offline worlds. Social networking services can strengthen relationships that have been formed before. Some forms of online social networking such as instant messaging are generally used by smaller groups of participants and are used to maintain existing friendship networks. In addition, social networking services also have an important role in the development and exploration of new relationships. For some people, especially those who are socially isolated, online relationships formed from social networking services are close relationships because online interactions are the chosen way or the only way to carry out social interactions. Even some of these online relationships can lead to offline relationships. This shows that social networks can form close relationships for friends between countries.

Social networks also have a role in foreign language learning. In research conducted by Derakhshan & Hasanabbasi (Derakhshan & Hasanabbasi, 2015) it is stated that social network users accidentally and directly learn foreign languages from native speakers of these languages. There are positive aspects of having social networks for learning foreign languages. They also mentioned that social networking platforms are able to improve foreign language learning skills, especially writing skills. The existence of interaction through social networks is a person's motivation to communicate with others. Piantari also stated that technological developments, especially for social networks, led to code-switching. Code-switching or code-switching is the transition from using one language to another. Code-switching behavior is a phenomenon that occurs in bilingual or multilingual communities.

One of the social networks is the Instagram platform, users can engage in interactions with individuals from various countries. Instagram gives users the opportunity to make friends internationally without being limited by distance. Users can communicate with people from other countries through comments, private messages and shared materials (Ju et al., 2016). Strong emotional attachments and better relationships between people of different cultural origins may result from this type of engagement.

The number of active users on Instagram has increased dramatically since the platform's introduction in 2010. The site has been able to draw in a wide audience because to its user-friendly layout, appealing features, and emphasis on visual material. Instagram is always improving and enhancing the user experience with features like feeds, stories, IGTV, and Reels, which helps to drive up the number of its active users .

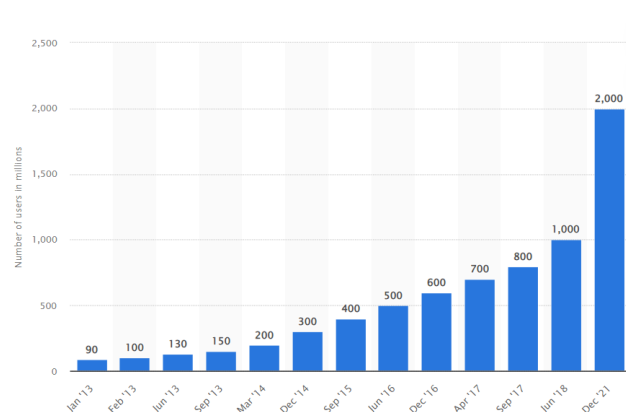


Figure 2 Number of users instagram

Users are encouraged to actively utilize Instagram for a variety of reasons. Instagram, in the first place, gives users a platform to express themselves and share significant events in their lives through images and videos. Users may display their hobbies, submit original material, and create a distinctive online persona. Apart from that, Instagram is a crucial tool for keeping in touch with friends, family, celebrities, and even the companies or influencers you follow. It also helps you build your network and communicate with them (Dhir et al., 2018). Instagram allows individuals to engage without restrictions because of its active user base throughout the globe. Users from other nations can converse and establish new relationships as a result. Users may broaden their search for new acquaintances by using tools like hashtags and geolocation to identify material relevant to their interests and current location (Brooke Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Instagram's capacity to introduce users to other cultures and ways of living throughout the world is one of its assets. Users may share their daily experiences with a global audience by sharing photographs and videos. They may learn about customs, cuisine, art, and daily life in areas they have never been before by watching material created by individuals in other nations. This fosters possibilities for individuals to deepen their connections and get a respect for various cultures (Chambers, 2013).

Instagram has made it possible for people from other nations to collaborate and work on collaborative projects. Users may communicate directly and establish conversations with tools like Direct Messages and comments. For instance, a team of artists from several nations can collaborate to produce original pieces of art. It promotes the sharing of knowledge, experiences, and creativity across cultural boundaries, which eventually strengthens global ties and creates robust social networks. Social networking platforms also play an important role in social activation and global awareness. Through online campaigns, users can mobilize support for social and humanitarian issues at the international level. They can participate in movements, share information, and raise funds to help people in need around the world. Platforms such as Change.org and GoFundMe provide an effective means of rallying support and building awareness of global issues. Social networking platforms facilitate cross-cultural knowledge exchange and learning. Users can follow accounts or groups that focus on a specific topic, such as science, art, music or languages. They can interact with individuals who share their interests and knowledge, exchange information with each other, and broaden their understanding of various topics. This generates diverse knowledge and enables cross-country collaboration in learning contexts (Rheingold, 1981).

5. Conclusion

Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have a big influence on international relationships and interactions. Users of this site are able to communicate with people from other nations. Users may deepen their awareness of the customs, food, and way of life of various nations by following user accounts from other cultural backgrounds. Users now have more chances to get insights that take into account cultural diversity and to increase their general knowledge of the globe. Additionally, Instagram offers users the chance to meet people from all around the world without being constrained by physical distance. Through comments, private messaging, and content sharing, users may interact with users in different countries. Strong emotional attachments may be formed via this type of engagement, which also strengthens friendships between people from various cultural backgrounds.

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