

# Effects of Social Media and Social Capital Utilization on Strengthening Individual Character

Kurotul Aeni

*Department of Elementary School Teacher Education, Faculty of Education,  
Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia  
Email: aeni.kurotul@gmail.com*

**Abstract**—This descriptive quantitative research on the effects of social media and social capital utilization on strengthening individual character involved 251 students of Primary School Teacher Education in Tegal. The objective of this research is to analyze and describe the effects of social media and social media utilization in strengthening student characters; how significant is the effects of social media and social capital in strengthening student characters; character strengthening from the use of social media and social capital. The result of this research shows that the use of social media does not affect character strengthening. It is proven by the result of t-test where t-count is lower than t-table ( $0.422 < 1.971$ ) and significant value is higher than alpha ( $0.673 > 0.05$ ). Why social media does not affect character strengthening was because the nature of social media is neutral. However, character strengthening depends on social capital utilization. Social capital provides positive effect on character strengthening because t-count is higher than t-table ( $19.685 > 1.971$ ) and significant value is lower than alpha ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, the value of F-count is higher than F-table ( $197.790 > 3.04$ ) and significant value is lower than alpha ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), it means that social media and social capital affect character strengthening. Contribution of social media and social capital on character strengthening is 0.612 or 61.2%, and the rest is affected by other factors. The average of character strengthening from social capital and social media utilization is relatively high; the highest average of character strengthening is 3.232, it is based on empowerment social capital by strengthening independent, discipline, hard work, communicative, and responsible characters; the second highest average of character strengthening is 3.162, it is based on norm social capital strengthening discipline, honest, and responsible character; the third highest average of character strengthening is 3.159, it is based on social capital of communication information strengthening communicative, tolerant, social concern, and responsible characters.

**Keywords**—*Social media, social capital, character, students.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The presence of online social media as a mean of communication, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Line, Path, WhatsApp, Blog, Wikipedia and so on, brings very fundamental effect in the format change of communication relationship and

people's character either individual or group, and in either national or international scale. Especially now, online social media can be accessed easily and directly from mobile phone owned by everybody. The relationship established among social media users, whether or not it is realized, cannot build, strengthen, and develop the character of social media users.

Today, social media engaging in human life routine has already spread out in all over lines and layers of society. Social media does not recognize caste, rank, and profession and even personages in government institution also have and use social media. Through social media, personal relationship can be built, business or organizational group can be established, and even mass power can be raised [25]. According to [7], basically social media is just the same with mass media divided into two parts, which are printed media and electronic media. Newspaper and magazine are categorized of printed media, while radio, television, film, online media (Internet) are examples of electronic media.

In general, social media is defined as online media supporting social interaction. Social media uses Website-based technology changing communication into interactive dialog. There are several popular social media sites such as: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Path, Line, WhatsApp. The dialog among the users of social media is transparent. Social media may change over time and it also can be reset by its developer, or in several particular sites, it can be changed by community. Social media provides and makes a new method to facilitate communication among users [16].

Social media functioned as a mean to establish communication and relationship with others in various issues has significant role in building the personality and character of its users. It is proven from the results of several research related to the effect of social media on character building of its users. The result of research conducted by [3] on social media role in the formation of identity, concluded that there is a tendency of media social users to use different account to establish communication with other media social users. Social media users tend to present positive image and

express their identity openly. They want to be exist and recognized by fellow user group.

Research performed [1] on the development of interpersonal relationship through social media showed that social media helped people to obtain various information, strengthen the relationship among users, release tension, fulfill emotional needs, and improve self-confident. Result of research performed by [14] on the effect of Internet use (social media), social control, and self control on character showed positive and significant effect.

Social media in fact is able to build and develop a social networking in society. Social media is also known as social networking that basically is one of social capital aspects. Social networking connected through social media is able to go beyond the limit of country, religion, ideology, and encourage the embodiment of social value such as social care, sharing, honesty, trust between each others, and creative economy. Fast response from status update created by the users or the event that is viral in the Internet supports the realization atmosphere of social capital utilization in establishing quality communication and cooperation at all standard or living [15].

In the paper titled 'The Rural School Community Centre', [11] said that social capital is a real asset or capital that is important in society life. Social capital includes attitude of good will, friendliness, sympathy, and close social and cooperation relationship among individuals forming a social group. Fukuyama (1995:39) in *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* states that prosperity and democracy condition as well as competitiveness of a society determine the level of trust among the citizen. Social capital will be stronger if society implements the norm of mutual help and cooperation through a social network.

Utilization of social media that is based on social capital owned by someone is assumed to be able to strengthen personal and social character of its users, build social concern, which eventually will grow togetherness value, solidarity, and boost independence and creative economy. Utilization of social media and social capital eventually are expected to be able to improve the quality of foundation of our social life, either politically, economically, or socio-cultural.

Based on previous research on social media and its effect on character as well as social media and social capital relationship, and case example showing social media strength in fighting for justice, then the writer is interested to carry out a research on the effect of social media and social capital utilization in strengthening individual character. This research is also based on the fact that most of research tend to find negative side of social media, it means that there is still lack of research exploring positive side of social media to be used as an input

to function social media as a mean to develop individual character.

In this research, students are the research subject because most of students are the active users of social media. Research performed by Damarwan, et., al. (2012) concludes that the use of social media is a part of students' life style. The use of social media is considered as a high demand for students. Moreover, student roles as agents of change, social control, and iron stock (future generation) can be facilitated through social media.

## II. METHOD

This research aims to describe the effects of social media and social capital utilization in strengthening character, describe type of social media and social capital affecting character strengthening and character that is strengthened by the social media and social capital utilization. This is an ex-post facto research and this research used quantitative approach. In ex-post facto research, the researcher collected the fact through the measurement on the phenomenon that had already happened before and identified its causes. Ex-post facto research identifies correlational causal relationship [20]. This research was conducted in UNNES Tegal, especially on students of Primary School Teacher Education. The research was carried out in early April-May 2017.

Population in this research was 676 students of Primary School Teacher Education in Tegal, academic year of 2016/2017. Method used to collect sample was probability sampling using simple random sampling technique. Total sample was determined using Slovin formula with level of trust used in this research was 5%, which means 251 students.

There were two variables in this research, which were independent and dependent variables. Independent variable (X) in this research was social media variable as independent variable (X1) and social capital variable was categorized as independent variable (X2). Measurement of social capital was carried out on 11 social capital aspects, which were group and network, trust and solidarity, collective action and cooperation, information and communication, social cohesion and inclusion, empowerment, delegation of authority, norm, bonding, bridging and linking. Meanwhile, independent variable (Y) in this research was character. Character value examined in this research were responsibility, respect, justice, courage, honesty, citizenship, discipline, caring, persistence, religious, tolerance, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, love to the motherland, appreciation on achievement, communicative ability, peaceful, active reader, social and environmental concern. Data Collection Technique in this research was primary and secondary data. Primary data was

collected through questionnaire distributed to respondents, while secondary data was collected form documentation obtained at the research site.

Research instrument used is a device arranged systematically and met scientific requirement to collect data from a variable or research phenomenon (Djarmiko, 2013:19). Instrument measurement was performed using scale. Likert Scale was used to measure attitude, opinion, perception of an individual or group about social phenomenon [21]. That was why, instrument scale used in this research was Likert Scale. Optional answer for this scale were A (Always), VF (Very Frequently), R (Rarely), VR (Very Rarely), and N (Never). According to Mardhapi (2007:37), Research using Likert scale finds that most of respondents tend to answer R (Rarely). To overcome such problem, the researcher only used four optional answers so that respondents answer was clear and decisive. Then, the optional answers were as follows:

The options was used to measure social media, social capital, and character strengthening. The result of the measurement were converted into score or numbers to be interpreted. The development of instrument in these content outlines were made based on description of theory explained before.

**Table 1.** Likert Scale after Modification  
Positive Statement

Positive Statement (Favorable)		Negative Statement (Unfavorable)	
Alternative Answers	Score	Alternative Answers	Score
Strongly Agree / Often	4	Strongly Disagree / Often	1
Agree / Sometimes	3	Disagree / Sometimes	2
Disagree / Seldom	2	Disagree / Seldom	3
Strongly Disagree / Never	1	Strongly Disagree / Never	4

**Table 2.** Content Outline of Social Media Instrument

No.	Dimension	Indicator
1	Social Media that is used	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Black Berry Messenger, MaySpace, path, Line
2	Time of Use	3 hours, 6 hours, 9 hours, 12 hours
3	Social Media Forum Frequently Visited	Entertainment, Politic Social, Religion/Moral, Education, Business

**Table 3.** Content Outline of Social Capital Instrument

No.	Dimension	Indicator
1	Group and Network	Identity, Feeling of belonging, Value to be striven for, Goal to be achieved, Group attachment, group reliance.
2	Trust and solidarity	Mutual trust, Keeping trust, Mutual understanding, Tolerance, Improving performance.
3	Cooperation and collective action	Willingness to cooperate, help each other, achieve common goal, sacrifice together, prioritize collective interest.
4	Information and communication	Information distribution, communication intensity, ways and means of delivering information and communication.
5	Social interaction and cohesion	Intensity of interaction and communication, Participation in social activity, Frequency of meeting.
6	Empowerment	Ability to obtain sources, Working improvement, Ability to participate and negotiate.
7	Norm	Rules/guidelines, Awareness of reward & punishment, Implementation of rules, Compliance with rules.
8	Authority delegation	Task delegation, Working responsibility, Appreciation.
9	Bonding	Internal commitment of a group, Strengthening internal identity, Improving internal performance, Maintaining internal goal, Prioritizing internal interest.
10	Bridging	Get cooperation with external group, Opening external network, Being accommodating in accepting changes, Showing altruistic, humanitaristic, and universal attitudes.
11	Linking	Relationship with high institution, Attention of high institution to the institution below, Conveying idea of cooperation and improvement.

**Table 4.** Content Outline of Character Instrument

No.	Dimension	Indicator
1	Character Value of Ministry of National Education	Religious, honest, tolerating, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democracy, curious, national spirit, love to the motherland, appreciate achievement, communicative, peaceful, active reader, social and environmental concern, responsibility

**III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Social media has important role in the development and changes in behavior to an individual and society. Social media becomes the development and changes instruments of a culture, it is not merely culture in the sense of art and symbol, but it also in the context of changes in practice, mode, lifestyle, and social norms (Dennis McQuil, 1987:1)

Character strengthening of individual or society through social media is still considered as controversial issue. Is social media certainly able to boost up the character strengthening of individual or is it an issue that cannot be debatable. There are many result of research describing positive and negative sides of social media utilization. Social media may play positive role if its utilization is based on positive values and goals within private individual or society, so it may be able to strengthen individual and society character. In contrast, if it is not based on positive value and goal, so social media may not be able to strengthen individual character and therefore, it may provide negative impact and weaken individual character.

Basically, social media is neutral and does not cause any problems. Positive and negative effects of social media on strengthening and weakening individual and society characters depends on motive and objective of the utilization of such social media. Some researchers have performed empirical studies on the effect of social media on students and the result shows that it is still important to perform further research on social media. They find out that the problem is not in social media, but in the utilization and objective of social media activity [12]

**Effects of social media and social capital utilization on strengthening students character.**

It is found that the utilization of social media by students of Primary School Teacher Education is very high, it is seen from the percentage in data analysis result showing that all of students involving in this research, who are 251 students (100%), use social media. Meanwhile, social capital utilization in using social media finds that majority of students

(53.8%) use social capital as a foothold or foundation when utilize social media, this percentage is categorized as high. Besides, there are 46.2% students use social capital as a foundation to utilize social media and this percentage is categorized as moderate. In conclusion, most of students of Primary School Teacher Education in Tegal use social capital as foothold and foundation when they use social media.

Furthermore, character strengthening obtained by students of Primary School Teacher Education through social capital utilization as basic to use social media shows that majority of students (56.6%), who are categorized as high admit to feel character strengthening when utilize social capital and (43.4%) students, who are categorized as moderate admit that they feel character strengthening when utilize social capital while using social media. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of students admit that they feel high character strengthening when they utilize social capital as foothold or basic while using social media.

Based on t-test (partial test) of data analysis result, it shows that social media that is not based on social capital and character values does not provide any effect on character strengthening. It is proven by data analysis result showing that value of t-count is lower than t-table ( $0.422 < 1.971$ ) and significant value is higher than alpha ( $0,673 > 0,05$ ), which means social media does not affect strengthening of individual character. Social media may affect character strengthening if the value of t-count is higher than t-table and significant value is lower than alpha. Reason why social media does not affect character strengthening is because the nature of social media is neutral. Positive and negative effects on character strengthening or weakening greatly depend on moral value attached in each individual.

The term of character strengthening basically tends to lead to positive effect of social media that may build and strengthen individual character rather than to negative effect. The positive effect can be felt by media social users if they aware of the importance of compliance with life value, moral value, and social capital utilized by the users of social media.

Social order built from communication in digital era, which is through social media will be destructive if the use of social media is not based on ethical value in communicating. When community establish communication, they are basically building trust. It comes naturally because communicating parties uphold ethical values. Ethical value is an awareness and knowledge about the good and bad attitude or action performed by humans. [16]

If the use of social media is not based on ethical values, moral value, and social capital attached within individual, so it may provide negative effect and most likely to lead individuals to behave badly; they do not like to help each other or do not have

empathy with others. They tend to have weak and common social bonding, they rather pay attention to the themselves and their own interest (narcissistic), which actually may lead to mental health disorder on an individual [22].

Several research that have been performed by scholars in various field clearly shows that negative effect of the use of social media is caused by life values and norms that is not applied in three categories. First, social media grows false conception of online "relationship" and fragile friendship so it may result in psychological and emotional disorder. Second, social media disorder happened when an individual becomes easily addicted to it and does not have time with family and others. Besides, it also may limit interpersonal skill that may lead to anti-social behavior. The last, social media becomes instrument for criminal, predator, and terrorist allowing themselves to conduct illegal action [2].

Therefore, it is necessary to integrate and make mass media as educational instrument having power in building character of society. It is important to neutralize and integrate principles of character education, social capital, ethical and norm values of society as an instrument to strengthen character in the program exposed in mass media, it is conducted as shared responsibility in building and strengthening nation character. The position of mass media is required to be equalized as an educator to be involved in providing effect on the process of character-building [24].

It is different from social media that does not affect character strengthening, social capital has positive effect on strengthening of student character. It is proven by the value of t-count that is higher than t-table ( $19,685 > 1,971$ ) and significant value that is lower than alpha ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). In conclusion, social capital provides positive effect on strengthening of student character.

Elements of social capital is certainly needed to promote education and character building, so that nation's strength to face global challenges can be prepared. Social capital as collective strength should be reconsidered as a socio-cultural strength in order to strengthen nation character. The elements of social capital play important role in the process of education and character strengthening within the scopes of family, school, and society [7].

Moreover, in order to find the effect of social media and social capital simultaneously on strengthening of student character, so F-test was conducted to prove the effect of independent variables (social media and social capital) simultaneously on dependent variable (character). Based on the result of F-test, it is find that value of F-table is 3,04, while the value of F-count is 197,790, therefore, the F-count is higher than F-table ( $197,79 > 3,04$ ) and the significant values is lower than alpha ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). It means that social

media and social capital simultaneously affect the strengthening of student character.

Actually, the result of F-test supports the research above, in which social media is basically neutral, but when its utilization is based on social capital or ethical and other norm values, so social media is able to strengthen character that is suitable with social capital, ethical and norm values applied.

#### **Effects of social media and social capital utilization in strengthening of student character**

In order to find the effect of social media in strengthening students character, so multiple linear regression analysis is performed and found that the model of regression equation is:  $Y = -0.178 - 0,016 X_1 + 1.100 X_2$ . This equation shows that constant value (a) is negative 0.178, which means the strengthening of individual character will be decreased to constant value of 0.178 unit, if it is not accompanied by social media and social capital. Regression coefficient value (b1) of social media is negative 0.016. It means that social media provides negative effect on strengthening of individual character. Therefore, where there is 1 unit increase in social media, then strengthening of individual character will decrease to 0.016 unit. Furthermore, regression coefficient value (b2) of social capital is positive 1,100. It means that social capital provides positive effect on strengthening of individual character. Therefore, where there is 1 unit increase in social capital, then strengthening of individual character will increase to 1,100 unit.

The result of linear regression analysis above explains that character strengthening will not be existed or even becoming weak if there is no social capital and positive value of life within an individual when he uses social media. That is why, social media basically has negative value on strengthening of individual character. The higher social media is used without social capital or other positive values of life, then the weaker individual character will be. Meanwhile, social capital has positive value on character strengthening, so if an individual often utilizes social capital while using social media, then their character will be strengthened.

Furthermore, in order to find the contribution provided by social media and social capital on the strengthening of individual character simultaneously, then the assessment of determination coefficient found from value of adjusted R square was performed, then determination coefficient value is found by 0.612. It means that contribution provided social media and social capital on the strengthening of individual character is 61.2%, and the rest is affected by other factors. Partially, the most dominant effect of contribution from each variable on the increase in strengthening of individual character is 61.3% from social capital and 0.19% from social media. It means that the role of social capital in the strengthening of

individual character is significant compared to social media, in addition to other factors having a role in the strengthening of individual character.

### **Character strengthening from the effect of social media and social capital utilization**

Based on data analysis, it is found average indicators in the strengthening of students character through the use of social media and social capital. Based on the student answers, it is found that character strengthening obtained by students from the utilization of social capital in using social media is relatively high, however, the highest character strengthening is empowerment social capital with the average of 3,232, the second is norm with the average of 3,162, the third is communication information with the average of 3,159, then it is followed by faith and solidarity with the average of 3,157 and so on, except social capital of group and network having moderate average value of 2,985.

Although the average value of character strengthening obtained in this research is high, but the highest character strengthening from the result of social capital and social media utilization is empowerment with strengthening that is emphasized in the independent, discipline, hard work, creative, communicative, and responsible character. According to Sumodiningrat (Ambar Teguh, 2004: 78-79) the term of empowerment in this case actually means to give "power". Perhaps, the most appropriate term should be "energize" or to give "energy" of empowerment, therefore, energy given could make the relevant individual able to act independently with the ability he has. Empowerment includes three basic matters, which are development, (enabling), strengthening potential or power (empowering), for the creation of independence [23].

Essentially, student is an individual who has been provided many theoretical ability but does not have sufficient practical ability. The presence of social media offering wide range of scientific fields to the users either practically or theoretically may give advantage for the them having strong desire to build, establish, and strengthen their personal character. Social media with positive value may encourage individual or students to embody, develop, and improve the ability they have. Empower the students to act independently in realizing their desire and dreams, enforce discipline and hard work to be successful, build communication with others and learn to be responsible with what is done.

Essentially, empowerment constitutes a creation of atmosphere or climate allowing potential of individu to develop (enabling). This logic is based on the assumption that there is no individual or student that absolutely does not have any power or ability. Every individual or students certainly have ability, but sometimes such ability has not been

discovered explicitly yet. That is why, empowerment is an effort to find such power and then it is realized and developed. Empowerment is an effort to encourage and motivate individuals to realize and maximize the ability they have that will lead to the process of independence. [23].

The second highest of character strengthening is to lead the individuals or students to comply with the norms. Norm as one of social capitals aims to make the individual aware of the importance of norm in life, compliance with the applicable rules and its implementation as well as awareness of reward and punishment as a result of compliance and violence against the existing norms and rules. Norm as one of social capitals may encourage, establish, and strengthen discipline, honest, and responsible characters of an individual.

Norm is a rule or order regulating the relationship of each individual's life aiming to achieve and realize code of Conduct in social life [18]. Norms is social rules regulating appropriate behavior in social interaction [19]. Kartono (2013:14) states that norm is principles, basic rules, standard, level or benchmark agreed and accepted by society to rule their life and behavior, so as to create a safe and enjoyable life.

Social media is a minor community or society miniature in which there are rules and norms that must be complied with and maintained by each member of the group. Social media fosters awareness and strengthens individual character to comply with the norms and act appropriately in accordance with the rule in a group of social media followed, so that all of activities carried out in the group can run well. Social media fosters and strengthens individual to be a person who will always consciously adhere to and comply with rules and norms established, either while acting as a member of particular social media group or society group.

The third highest of character strengthening obtained while using social media that is based on social capital is communicative character established within an individual or student. Social media becomes the most appropriate media to obtain and deliver information as well as establish communication with other individual or member of media group. Information and communication in social capital becoming the foundation in using social media may strengthen communicative, tolerating, social caring, and responsible character

Rulli Nasrullah in his book *Social Media: Perspective, Culture, and Socio-technology* [13] explains several concepts of social media that have been stated by some experts, among others are: that Social media is a mean to share information, build cooperation among the users and take action collectively. Social media enables individual or society to get together, share, communicate, and collaborate. Social media strengthens the

relationship among the users and at once also becomes a social bond.

The use of social media that is based on social capital encourages students to actively share information and communicate with each other to give benefit with other members. The effort to share information and establish communication taken by students shows their commitment and social concern in addition to grow their responsibility if there is social inequality that need to be solved

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the research result and discussion on the effect of social media and social capital utilization on the strengthening of individual character, so it can be concluded that:

The use of social media that is not based on social capital does not affect character strengthening. It is proven by the result of t-test showing that the value of t-count is lower than t-table which is  $(0.422 < 1.971)$  and significant value is higher than alpha  $(0.673 > 0,05)$ . Reason why social media does not affect character strengthening is because the nature of social media is basically neutral. Positive and negative effects on character strengthening or weakening greatly depend on moral value attached in each individual. In contrast, social capital provides positive effect on strengthening of student character because t-count is higher than t-table  $(19.685 > 1.971)$  and significant value is lower than alpha  $(0,000 < 0,05)$ . Elements of social capital have important role in the process of character strengthening. Then the result of F-count is found higher  $(197.790 > 3.04)$  and the significant value is lower than alpha  $(0,000 < 0,05)$ , it means that there is effects of social media and social capital simultaneously on the strengthening of students character.

The effects of social media and social capital in the strengthening of student character is found from the regression equation:  $Y = -0.178 - 0,016 X1 + 1.100 X2$ . The result of this equation shows that the value of negative constant is 0.178, which means that the character strengthening will decrease to 0.178 unit if it does not accompanied with social media and social capital. Regression coefficient value of social media is negative, which is -0.016. It means that social media provides negative effect on strengthening of individual character. Therefore, where there is 1 unit increase in social media, then strengthening of individual character will decrease to 0.016 unit. Furthermore, regression coefficient value of social capital is positive 1,100. Therefore, where there is 1 unit increase in social capital, then strengthening of individual character will increase to 1,100 unit. Meanwhile, the contribution given by social media and capital media on the strengthening of individual character simultaneously finds determination coefficient value of 0.612. It means that contribution given by social media and social

capital on the strengthening of individual character is 61.25, while the rest is affected by other factors with contribution of social modal and social capital respectively is 61.3% and 0.19%.

The character strengthening obtained by students from the utilization of social capital in using social media is relatively high, however, the highest character strengthening is empowerment social capital with average of 3.232 and character strengthening on independence, discipline, hard work, creativity, communicative ability, and responsibility. The second highest of character strengthening is norm with the average of 3.162, which encourages, establishes, and strengthens discipline, honest, and responsible character of individual. Next, The third highest of character strengthening is communication information with average of 3.159. This can strengthen character of communicative ability, tolerance, social concern, and responsibility.

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