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Privacy Awareness and Personal Data Protection among Social Media Users in Indonesia: A Socio-Legal Perspective

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Abstrak | Bahasa Indonesia

Pesatnya perkembangan media sosial telah meningkatkan aktivitas pertukaran informasi dan komunikasi digital di Indonesia. Di sisi lain, penggunaan media sosial yang semakin intensif juga meningkatkan risiko penyalahgunaan data pribadi, kebocoran informasi, serta pelanggaran privasi pengguna. Kondisi ini menunjukkan bahwa kesadaran privasi menjadi faktor penting dalam mendorong perilaku perlindungan data pribadi di lingkungan digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kesadaran privasi terhadap perilaku perlindungan data pribadi pengguna media sosial di Indonesia dari perspektif sosio-hukum. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei yang melibatkan pengguna aktif media sosial dari berbagai wilayah di Indonesia sebagai responden. Data dikumpulkan melalui penyebaran kuesioner secara daring dan dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif serta analisis regresi linear sederhana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesadaran privasi berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap perilaku perlindungan data pribadi. Pengguna yang memiliki tingkat kesadaran privasi yang lebih tinggi cenderung lebih berhati-hati dalam mengelola informasi pribadi, mengatur pengaturan keamanan akun, serta memahami pentingnya perlindungan data dalam aktivitas digital. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan literasi privasi dan kesadaran hukum masyarakat merupakan faktor penting dalam mendukung perlindungan data pribadi serta menciptakan lingkungan digital yang lebih aman dan bertanggung jawab.

Kata Kunci: Kesadaran Privasi, Perlindungan Data Pribadi, Media Sosial, Perspektif Sosio-Legal, Masyarakat Digital

Abstract | English

The rapid growth of social media has significantly increased digital communication and information exchange in Indonesia. At the same time, the intensive use of social media has heightened the risks of personal data misuse, information leakage, and privacy violations. These challenges indicate that privacy awareness plays a crucial role in encouraging responsible personal data protection behavior in digital environments. This study aims to examine the influence of privacy awareness on personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia from a socio-legal perspective. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey method involving active social media users from various regions of Indonesia. Data were collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression analysis. The findings reveal that privacy awareness has a positive and significant influence on personal data protection behavior. Individuals with higher levels of privacy awareness tend to be more cautious in managing personal information, configuring account security settings, and understanding the importance of protecting personal data during online activities. These findings suggest that strengthening privacy literacy and public legal awareness is essential for improving personal data protection practices and fostering a safer, more responsible digital society.

Keywords: Privacy Awareness, Personal Data Protection, Social Media, Socio-Legal Perspective, Digital Society

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the way individuals communicate, access information, and interact within contemporary society. Social media platforms have become indispensable communication tools, enabling users to exchange information, establish social relationships, conduct business activities, and participate in various online communities. The widespread adoption of digital technology has created a highly connected society where personal information is continuously generated, shared, and stored through digital platforms. While these developments provide numerous social and economic benefits, they also raise significant concerns regarding the protection of personal data and individual privacy.

Social media has become one of the most influential digital environments for communication and social interaction. Millions of users share personal information, photographs, opinions, locations, and daily activities through various social networking platforms. Such practices have increased opportunities for communication and social participation but have simultaneously exposed users to risks associated with personal data misuse, identity theft, cybercrime, unauthorized data collection, and privacy violations. Consequently, privacy protection has become an increasingly important issue within contemporary digital society, requiring greater public awareness and responsible digital behavior.

Privacy awareness refers to an individual's understanding of the importance of protecting personal information and recognizing potential risks associated with digital activities. Individuals who possess higher levels of privacy awareness are generally more cautious when sharing personal information, selecting privacy settings, and interacting with unknown users in digital environments. Privacy awareness therefore plays a significant role in encouraging responsible online behavior and reducing vulnerabilities associated with personal data exposure. In the context of rapidly expanding digital communication, strengthening public awareness regarding privacy protection has become an essential component of digital citizenship and responsible technology use.

Indonesia has experienced remarkable growth in internet penetration and social media usage over the past decade. The increasing accessibility of smartphones and affordable internet services has encouraged millions of Indonesians to participate actively in digital communication through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, X, WhatsApp, and YouTube. As digital interaction becomes an integral part of everyday life, individuals continuously exchange personal information in online environments without fully understanding the potential consequences of data disclosure. This situation has increased public concern regarding digital privacy, data security, and personal information protection.

The increasing frequency of cyber incidents involving personal data leakage has highlighted the urgency of strengthening privacy awareness among social media users. Cases involving unauthorized access to personal information, online fraud, phishing attacks, identity theft, and misuse of digital accounts have become more common in recent years. These incidents demonstrate that technological advancement alone is insufficient to ensure digital security. Instead, effective personal data protection requires individuals to actively understand privacy risks and adopt appropriate protective behaviors while engaging in digital environments.

From a socio-legal perspective, personal data protection extends beyond legal regulations and institutional enforcement. It also involves the interaction between legal norms, public awareness, social behavior, and cultural practices within society. Laws concerning personal data protection provide an

important legal framework; however, their effectiveness depends largely on the willingness of individuals to understand privacy rights and implement responsible behaviors when using digital technologies. Therefore, examining privacy awareness from a socio-legal perspective provides a broader understanding of how legal principles and social behavior interact in shaping personal data protection practices.

Previous studies have investigated various aspects of privacy protection, digital literacy, cybersecurity awareness, and online behavior. Existing research generally demonstrates that privacy awareness positively influences users' decisions regarding information disclosure, online security practices, and digital communication behavior. Other studies emphasize the importance of digital literacy in improving individuals' understanding of cybersecurity risks and encouraging safer internet use. Nevertheless, many previous investigations focus primarily on technological aspects or legal regulations, while relatively limited attention has been given to examining privacy awareness as a social factor influencing personal data protection behavior among social media users.

This condition indicates the existence of a research gap. Although numerous studies have explored personal data protection from legal and technological perspectives, fewer studies specifically examine the influence of privacy awareness on personal data protection behavior through a socio-legal approach. Moreover, previous research often emphasizes institutional responsibilities, whereas the role of individual awareness and social behavior has received comparatively less attention. Therefore, further investigation is required to understand how privacy awareness contributes to responsible personal data protection within Indonesia's rapidly developing digital society.

Furthermore, the growing dependence on digital communication has made personal data protection an increasingly important component of social interaction. Every digital activity, including communication, online transactions, participation in virtual communities, and content sharing, involves the exchange of personal information that may be vulnerable to misuse if not properly protected. Consequently, strengthening privacy awareness not only benefits individual users but also contributes to creating a safer digital environment, increasing public trust in digital platforms, and supporting sustainable digital transformation within society.

This study therefore aims to examine the influence of privacy awareness on personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia from a socio-legal perspective. Specifically, the research investigates whether higher levels of privacy awareness encourage individuals to adopt safer digital practices, manage personal information more responsibly, and demonstrate greater compliance with privacy protection principles during online activities.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research enriches the literature in the fields of Socio-Legal Studies, Social Sciences, and Digital Society by providing empirical evidence regarding the relationship between privacy awareness and personal data protection behavior. Practically, the findings may serve as valuable references for policymakers, educational institutions, digital platform providers, and community organizations in developing programs that strengthen privacy literacy, improve public legal awareness, and encourage responsible digital behavior among social media users in Indonesia.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design using a survey approach to examine the influence of privacy awareness on personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia from a socio-legal perspective. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to objectively measure the relationship between privacy awareness and personal data protection behavior through numerical data and statistical analysis. The study focused on understanding how users' awareness of digital privacy influences their behavior in protecting personal information while using social media platforms.

The population of this study consisted of active social media users residing in various regions of Indonesia. The target respondents included individuals aged 18 years and above who regularly used at least

one social media platform, such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, X, or WhatsApp. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that respondents met the research criteria. The selection criteria included: (1) being an active social media user for at least one year, (2) accessing social media on a daily basis, and (3) having experience managing personal information through digital platforms. A total of 130 respondents participated in this study.

Data were collected using an online questionnaire developed based on concepts of privacy awareness and personal data protection behavior derived from previous studies in socio-legal research and digital communication. The independent variable, privacy awareness, was measured using indicators including awareness of privacy risks, understanding of personal data protection, concern for online privacy, knowledge of digital security, and awareness of legal rights related to personal information. The dependent variable, personal data protection behavior, was measured through indicators such as the use of strong passwords, management of privacy settings, cautious sharing of personal information, account security practices, and responsible online behavior. Each questionnaire item was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Prior to data collection, the research instrument was evaluated through validity and reliability testing to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the questionnaire items. Item validity was assessed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation technique, while reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The instrument was considered reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeded 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency among all questionnaire items.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis to describe respondents' demographic characteristics and the distribution of responses for each research variable. Furthermore, simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of privacy awareness on personal data protection behavior among social media users. Before hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests consisting of normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity tests were performed to ensure that the data satisfied the assumptions required for regression analysis. All statistical analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software with a significance level of 0.05.

The findings of this study are expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between privacy awareness and personal data protection behavior from a socio-legal perspective. In addition, the results are expected to contribute to the development of research in the fields of Socio-Legal Studies, Social Sciences, and Digital Society while providing practical recommendations for policymakers, digital platform providers, educational institutions, and the wider community to strengthen privacy literacy and promote responsible digital behavior in Indonesia.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

This study involved 130 active social media users from various regions in Indonesia. Based on the demographic characteristics, the respondents represented different age groups, educational backgrounds, and occupations. Most respondents reported using social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, Facebook, and X on a daily basis for communication, information sharing, entertainment, education, and business activities. The majority of respondents also indicated that they were familiar with privacy settings and recognized the importance of protecting personal information while engaging in digital communication.

The descriptive statistical analysis indicated that respondents demonstrated a relatively high level of privacy awareness. Most participants agreed that protecting personal information is essential when using social media and acknowledged the potential risks associated with sharing personal data online. Respondents also showed positive attitudes toward implementing security measures, including using strong passwords, activating two-factor authentication, regularly reviewing privacy settings, and limiting the disclosure of sensitive personal information.

The results of the simple linear regression analysis revealed that privacy awareness had a positive and statistically significant influence on personal data protection behavior among social media users. The significance value obtained was below 0.05, indicating that the proposed hypothesis was accepted. The findings suggest that individuals with higher levels of privacy awareness are more likely to adopt responsible digital practices and implement preventive measures to safeguard their personal information while using social media platforms.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination demonstrated that privacy awareness contributed substantially to variations in personal data protection behavior, while the remaining variation was explained by other factors outside the scope of this study. These findings indicate that privacy awareness represents one of the key social factors influencing responsible digital behavior and the protection of personal information within Indonesia's digital society.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that privacy awareness plays an important role in encouraging responsible personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia. Individuals who possess a greater understanding of digital privacy are more likely to recognize potential risks associated with personal information disclosure and implement appropriate protective measures during online activities. These findings indicate that privacy awareness has become an essential component of responsible digital citizenship within contemporary society.

The positive relationship between privacy awareness and personal data protection behavior suggests that users who understand the importance of digital privacy tend to manage their personal information more carefully. They are more likely to utilize privacy settings, create secure passwords, verify application permissions, and limit the sharing of sensitive information on social media platforms. Such behaviors reduce the potential risks of identity theft, unauthorized data access, online fraud, and other forms of digital exploitation.

From a socio-legal perspective, the findings emphasize that effective personal data protection depends not only on legal regulations but also on the awareness and active participation of individuals in safeguarding their own information. Although legal frameworks provide essential protection for digital privacy, their effectiveness is strengthened when individuals understand their rights and responsibilities within digital environments. Therefore, privacy awareness serves as an important bridge between legal protection and responsible social behavior in the digital era.

The study also reveals that digital literacy contributes to strengthening privacy awareness among social media users. Individuals who are familiar with digital technologies and online security practices are generally better prepared to identify potential threats and adopt preventive strategies to protect their personal information. This finding highlights the importance of integrating privacy education and digital literacy programs into broader public awareness initiatives to support safer online environments.

Despite these positive findings, the study indicates that challenges remain in promoting comprehensive privacy awareness across all segments of society. Differences in educational background, digital experience, and access to information may influence users' understanding of privacy protection. Consequently, collaborative efforts involving governments, educational institutions, digital platform providers, and community organizations are necessary to improve public awareness and encourage responsible digital behavior.

Overall, this study contributes to the development of Socio-Legal Studies, Social Sciences, and Digital Society by providing empirical evidence that privacy awareness positively influences personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia. The findings further emphasize that strengthening privacy literacy and promoting responsible online behavior are essential for creating a safer, more secure, and socially responsible digital environment. Furthermore, the findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating privacy awareness into broader digital literacy initiatives.

As digital technologies continue to evolve, social media users are increasingly exposed to complex privacy risks that require not only technical knowledge but also responsible social behavior. Strengthening privacy awareness through educational programs, public campaigns, and collaborative initiatives involving government institutions, educational organizations, and digital platform providers can enhance individuals' ability to protect personal information while fostering greater trust and accountability within Indonesia's digital society. Such efforts are expected to support the development of a secure, inclusive, and sustainable digital environment where personal data protection becomes a shared social responsibility.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that privacy awareness has a positive and significant influence on personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that individuals with higher levels of privacy awareness are more likely to adopt responsible digital practices, including managing privacy settings, protecting personal information, and implementing appropriate security measures while engaging in online activities. These behaviors contribute to reducing the risks associated with personal data misuse and strengthen responsible participation within contemporary digital society.

The study also indicates that personal data protection should not be viewed solely as a legal obligation but as a shared social responsibility that requires active participation from individuals, communities, governments, and digital platform providers. Strengthening privacy awareness through digital literacy and public education initiatives can encourage safer online behavior, increase public trust in digital platforms, and support the development of a more secure digital environment.

The findings contribute to the advancement of Socio-Legal Studies, Social Sciences, and Digital Society by providing empirical evidence regarding the relationship between privacy awareness and personal data protection behavior among social media users in Indonesia. Practically, the results may serve as valuable references for policymakers, educational institutions, digital platform providers, and community organizations in designing policies and educational programs that promote privacy literacy, strengthen public legal awareness, and encourage responsible digital engagement.

Future research is recommended to examine additional factors influencing personal data protection behavior, including digital literacy, cybersecurity knowledge, trust in digital platforms, social influence, and technological readiness. Expanding the study to different demographic groups, regions, and digital platforms would provide a broader understanding of privacy awareness and support the development of more effective strategies for protecting personal data in Indonesia's rapidly evolving digital society.

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