

The Role of Media Convergence in the Netflix App in Generation Z's Daily Life

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Abstract

Media convergence is an inevitable occurrence for mass media companies because convergence is the key to the sustainability of the media industry in the current multimedia era. Media convergence also cannot be separated from student life, therefore media convergence on the Netflix application is one of their new choices in order to meet the satisfaction of entertainment. The purpose of this study is to identify the role of media convergence in the Netflix application in the daily lives of Gen Z, and this study uses qualitative methods which later researchers will collect data by conducting interviews with 2 Gen Z who watch shows on Netflix and 1 expert informant who is experienced in the field of video streaming. After the interview is conducted, the data will be transcribed and reanalyzed by coding. The results of this study show that the media convergence that occurs on Netflix has its own role for Gen Z, they now prefer to watch movies or series through Netflix because they can be watched anywhere and anytime, Netflix is also indirectly a source of information for Gen Z, although they still have the purpose of watching shows on Netflix as entertainment. Basically, the internet is the main factor why media convergence on Netflix and other video streaming applications occurs, because the internet can change the style and way of life of humans to all aspects of life.

Keywords: Media Convergence, Netflix, Generation Z, Streaming Platform, Digital Lifestyle

1. Introduction

Currently, technological development in Indonesia is increasingly advanced and developing, this makes all media industries inevitably have to always follow the development of the times and technology that creates media convergence. In addition to the process of technological development or technological shift, media convergence also includes changes in cultural, social, and industrial terms that invite audiences to seek and obtain the latest information. Consciously or not, media convergence has also helped us in daily life, from children, teenagers, to adults. Media convergence refers to a situation where several media systems coexist and where media content flows smoothly between them (Derviana & Fitriawan, 2019).

Convergence is divided into two aspects, namely technology and industry. Technically, this creative content is delivered through wireless networks, and broadcast on computers through a mobile phone that is connected to television sets. In the industrial aspect, media companies collaborate with technology and telecommunications companies where they unite strategic groups to develop new types in their business, and from this companies can profit. Television media now also utilizes media convergence to create ways to re-broadcast their programs on new media such as YouTube and other streaming applications. This new change will be the focus of discussion, especially about how the impact of media convergence on changes and strategies of traditional television stations. Initially, print



media and radio began to feel the phenomenon of media convergence, until it finally began to spread into the national television industry (Romli, 2016)

Media convergence is an unavoidable choice for mass media companies because convergence is the key to the sustainability of the media industry in the current multimedia era. Media convergence carries the concept of unifying various information services in one information device creating a digitalization breakthrough that can no longer stem the flow of information (Landri & dan Yasir, 2018). The media industry is now also continuously developing, such as television media, radio, and other new media. Changes in lifestyle in society that tend to use gadgets to get information and entertainment, and are also followed by the development of other new media (Ramadani & Tahapary, 2024). Because of this, many people now subscribe to paid television or pay television, for example such as MNC Group, CT Corp, Emtek, and others, even Gen Z currently also uses many paid streaming applications such as Netflix, DisneyPlus, Viu, Vidio, Mola TV and others. The advancement of mass media makes them select in obtaining information needs. In this modern era, information is more easily obtained by the general public, because everything has been packaged attractively to be given to consumers (Firdausyi & Anggraini, 2021). In practice, one of the electronic media that performs media convergence is television. This is done by television to maintain the existence of television which currently has a declining trend in the number of viewers. Media convergence also cannot be separated from the life of Gen Z. Media convergence on the Netflix application is one of them.

Quoting from a YouTube video titled "Netflix at Its Lowest Point. Blind Pig War Strategy at the Border" uploaded by the channel "Dr. Indrawan Nugroho", Netflix company was founded in 1997 by Reed Hastings and Marc Randolph. Initially Netflix used a DVD rental system through the website, where DVDs that were ordered would be sent by mail. A few years later, precisely in 2004, Netflix made a new innovation that collaborated with Tivo, they launched a device that could be used for streaming. However, the collaboration did not last long, due to licensing issues from the device that did not meet standards. Then in 2007, Netflix introduced a new feature called "watch now". This feature made it easier for its customers to watch movies or series directly without having to wait for DVDs to be sent. The following year, Netflix began collaborating with famous film producers and distributors such as Disney, Sony Pictures, Paramount, and others. In 2010, the number of video streaming on Netflix was more than DVDs rented, this happened along with the development of the times that made users switch to streaming services. Finally, several years later until now, Netflix has completely shifted its focus to streaming services (Nugroho, 2022)

Netflix has become one of Gen Z's choices to fulfill satisfaction for entertainment. Researchers decided to choose Netflix and Gen Z because throughout 2020 Netflix business could be said to be the most popular video streaming application in Indonesia. Based on Statista, the total number of people subscribing to Netflix was 221.84 million people worldwide until Q4 2021, an increase of 8.93% compared to the same quarter in the previous year, which was 203.66 million people (Annur, 2021). Then, in Q1 2023 Netflix had 232.5 million subscribers, an increase of 1.75 million subscribers compared to the previous quarter. This is a positive development for Netflix, because in Q1 and Q2 2022 they lost hundreds of thousands of subscribers per quarter (Muhamad, 2023).

This research aims to examine the role of media convergence in the Netflix application and analyze Gen Z's behavior after using it. The study seeks to enhance understanding of media convergence in the digital era while fostering critical thinking. Academically, it serves as a reference for future research; practically, it broadens Gen Z's awareness of how Netflix influences their daily lives.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Previous Study

This research is certainly inseparable from the contribution of previous research that has been conducted by a number of other researchers. The existence of previous research serves as a reference to see differences in approach, scope of study, and analysis results that are relevant to the topic of media convergence. These studies enrich the theoretical and methodological foundation in understanding the role of media convergence, especially in the context of changes in communication patterns and mass media adaptation.

One of the research used as a reference is the work of Gushevinalti et al. (2020) which identify changes in the characteristics of mass communication in the era of convergence and describe the forms of new media that are classified as mass communication. Using qualitative methods, this study concludes that communication transformation has shifted patterns from one-way transmission to two-way conversation, thus changing the nature and purpose of communication itself. Media convergence is evidence of the dynamics of communication world development that continues to experience change.

Another reference is research conducted by Derviana & Fitriawan (2019) which aims to explore the reality of convergence applied by Republika media using five dimensions of convergence according to Rich Gordon. This qualitative research shows that Republika has applied all dimensions of convergence, although in its implementation there are several obstacles. One concrete form of this convergence is the presence of the Republika Online digital platform which marks the adaptive step of media towards the digital era. By examining these previous studies, the study of media convergence in the Netflix application can be enriched from both conceptual and empirical sides.

2.2. Media Convergence

Convergence in the Indonesian dictionary means a state of reaching a meeting point, convergence, while the term convergence literally means two or more objects merging at a point and focusing the eye on a very close place. In 2002, the word convergence could be used for things like this, for example companies, their work, and how employees do their work. Media convergence is one of the media developments in the era of technological advancement and information technology not only technological shift, but convergence can change the relationship between existing technologies, both from the industry, market, genre, and audience sides (Haquu, 2020).

In the simplest concrete form, media convergence which is the mixing or merging of a number of different media or technologies can be seen from the integration between computers with television and radio, or between telephones, satellites, cables, fax machines, the Internet, and even with photocopying machines (Irawan, 2014). This is seen in mainstream media integrated with digital media. In addition to a wider audience reach, various technological features can also be used in media convergence.

2.3. Video Streaming Applications

Through video streaming, audiences can access anywhere and can repeat, speed up, and pause videos. Video streaming has flexible properties in terms of time and usefulness (Wijaya et al., 2022). Streaming is a way to make video, audio, and other multimedia content available directly on various types of networks. Data in stream files is divided into several small packages that are sent in a continuous stream to end-user devices or phones. In streaming services, there are two options namely "on demand" & "live". For example, on-demand streaming services are video and music. Live streaming services are now radio broadcasts or television broadcasts that are broadcast simultaneously (Diwi et al., 2015). Seen from the process, streaming is a technology for sending files from server to client through

packet-based networks. Streaming is a method to make audio, video, and other multimedia available for real-time on different types of networks (Diwi et al., 2015).

2.4. Gen Z

In Pratama et al. (2019), Gen Z is a generation that is in the digital era, they have different habits from other generations, especially in consuming entertainment. Gen Z prefers to enjoy their entertainment content through the internet. This is because they are influenced by technological developments and very fast internet penetration. Gen Z is the youngest generation that has just entered the workforce, Gen Z can also be called iGeneration or internet generation. Gen Z is also known to be able to do various activities at the same time (multitasking) such as using social media on phones, listening to music using earphones, and browsing using PCs. The life of Gen Z is always connected to the internet. From an early age they have been introduced to advanced technology and gadgets that indirectly affect their lives. They were born when technology had mastered the world, therefore Gen Z is also commonly called the silent generation, the silent generation because of its technological sophistication. In addition, Gen Z is also known as iGeneration or internet generation (Putra, 2016).

They have their own goals for their work, they are a professional generation that is career-oriented, ambitious, and has high technical and language skills. Therefore, they are high-quality workers. Companies must prepare to involve Gen Z because they are efficient workers in the digital era (Elmore, 2014). The division of generations based on birth year provides an overview of different social and cultural characteristics in each age group. The Baby Boomer generation includes individuals born between 1946 and 1964. Next, Generation X consists of those born in the range of 1965 to 1980. Generation Y, also known as the millennial generation, includes births from 1981 to 1996. Then, Generation Z includes individuals born between 1997 and 2012. Finally, Generation Alpha is the generation born starting in 2013 until an estimated 2025 (Ramadhani, 2023). This division becomes important in understanding media behavior and preferences, including in the context of using applications like Netflix by Gen Z.

2.5. Research Framework

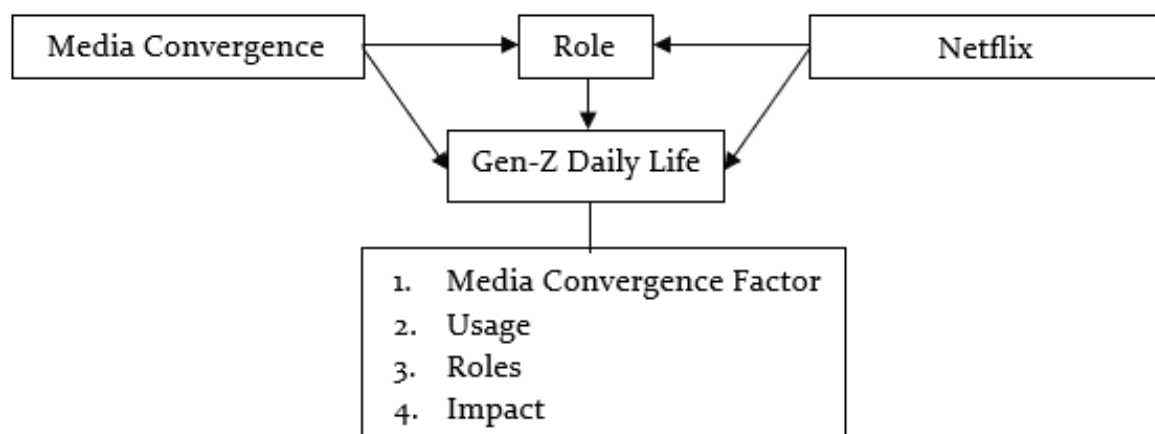


Figure 1. Research Framework

3. Methods

In this research, researchers will use a qualitative approach. Here researchers will use descriptive research method types. Descriptive research is a method that is represented to describe existing phenomena, which occur now or in the past. This research does not manipulate or change independent variables, but illustrates a situation realistically (Sugiyono, 2013).

This study focuses on two Gen Z individuals who regularly watch Netflix and one expert in video streaming. Gen Z was chosen because they have grown up in a digital era shaped by advanced technology and evolving media habits. Participants were selected based on their experience using Netflix and involvement in video streaming. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and informal observations of Gen Z users within the researcher's social circle. These methods allowed the researcher to gain deeper insight into participants' behaviors and media usage. As a qualitative study, the researcher played an active role in data collection, analysis, and reporting, making direct engagement essential to understanding the role of media convergence in Gen Z's daily lives.

The purpose of this procedure is to make the data easier to understand, so that the findings can be communicated to others. From the collected data, researchers will conduct data reduction, meaning this research forms and refers to the information needed, reduces unnecessary information, and groups data from the results that have been studied. According to Sugiyono (2013), in qualitative research, data or results have shown validity if there are no more differences between what is reported and what actually happens to the object that has been studied. Data validity checking is done through data truth tests that include triangulation of data sources. Data source triangulation uses data sources such as interviews, observations, documents, archives, or interviews with many people who may have different perspectives to find out the truth of certain information. Triangulation in credibility testing is known as data checking that comes from various sources with various ways and various times (Sugiyono, 2013).

4. Results and Discussion

In this era of advanced and dynamic technology, we have various choices to choose what types of media we like and are interested in, these choices can also influence Gen Z behavior in daily life. However, currently, on average Gen Z prefers new media that emerge and have various unique and interesting features in them, such as one of them is the Netflix application.

Researchers have obtained 2 Gen Z and 1 expert as informants by conducting interviews, and researchers have also prepared several questions that were prepared beforehand. All interviews were conducted online, interviews lasted 15-30 minutes. After the interview was completed, data was written in transcripts that had been made, then researchers conducted open coding and selective coding. Based on coding, there are 2 categories of selective coding namely (1) Media convergence (2) The role of media convergence towards Gen Z.

4.1. Media Convergence

4.1.1. Netflix Application Usage

After conducting online interviews via Zoom, MAP as informant 1 and FA as informant 2 explained that they chose the Netflix application because it has practical features. Informant MAP also explained that he consumes Netflix every day "If I use it every day, like when eating in the morning, afternoon, and evening while watching, when there's a work break, I also watch and when there's free time" (Informant MAP, April 2023). Meanwhile, Informant FA uses the Netflix application only in between his busy activities "I usually use video streaming applications in between my busy activities such as after doing assignments or when waiting for class hours, and before sleeping" (Informant FA, April 2023).

MAP as informant 1 and FA as informant 2 also acknowledged that smartphones are one of the phenomena of media convergence that is very close to them, because smartphones are objects that they always use to carry out daily activities such as working, getting entertainment, and finding information. Informant LI believes that the biggest phenomenon of media convergence is social media, "the most interesting and biggest phenomenon of media convergence is social media, because with the rapid development of social media making everything digital, people can do and get anything from social media" (Informant LI, May 2023).

Informant MAP gave his response to media convergence that occurs on Netflix "Because of the development of the times, such as newspapers that used to only be read through newspaper paper and were troublesome to carry everywhere but now can be accessed with HP. Same as television that cannot be carried everywhere, while video streaming applications can be accessed from any device such as HP, laptop. As long as the facilities are adequate, we can definitely access video streaming applications." (Informant MAP, April 2023). Meanwhile, Informant FA believes "In my opinion it is done so they can save budget or for the sustainability of their industry, that's why they have to do media convergence" (Informant FA, April 2023)

After conducting online interviews via Zoom, according to LI as an expert informant, media cannot fully switch to digital media, because there are still users of non-digital media "Looking at the media convergence phenomenon that is happening now, it seems that media cannot change 100% to switch from conventional media to digital media. Because, there are still generations that used conventional media first rather than digital. This makes some media still produce non-digital products" (Informant LI, April 2023). LI also said, the reason why media convergence on Netflix applications occurs "It happens because technology that also continues to develop, one of which is the discovery of the internet, the internet becomes the greatest discovery during the 21st century. With the internet, it can change the style and way of life of humans to all aspects of life" (Informant LI, May 2023).

On the other hand, Netflix also has positive and negative aspects respectively. Based on informant MAP's opinion "The positive thing is it has a wide range of discussion topics and teaches more new knowledge. If the negative effect, is it can be watched anytime and anywhere, so we become lazy to do other things" (Informant MAP, April 2023). Meanwhile Informant FA explained that "The positive thing is we know what we didn't know before, because in those films many tell stories that are taken from true stories, so what cannot be obtained on television we can get by watching films on Netflix applications and also when watching films can help the mind become calm from college assignments. If the negative is we become wasteful of data, wasteful of money because we have to subscribe, and also if we are addicted to watching too long it becomes a waste of time" (Informant FA, April 2023).

Informant LI believes that "From the positive side, media convergence makes information circulation faster. For example, through social media, many current news that are now reported first through social media. From the negative side, for those who live outside the city center or remote areas will find it difficult to enjoy digital media like Netflix because there are still many processes to find access to these digital media" (Informant LI, May 2023). From the three informant responses above, it can be said that informant MAP and informant FA have similar opinions about the positive things of the Netflix application, namely by watching shows on video streaming applications they can find new knowledge and information.

4.1.2. The Role of Media Convergence Towards Gen Z

In interviews that have been conducted with 3 informants, each informant also responded to how media convergence plays a role in their daily lives. Informant MAP gave his opinion about the rates offered by Netflix "If I don't mind, because they provide packages that can be chosen according to needs,

for example there are 'family' packages that can be enjoyed by the family, so it can be cheaper" (Informant MAP, April 2023). However, informant FA still objects to the price offered by Netflix, "A little objectionable, because the price is still a little too expensive and not all shows we are looking for are there. For example, if the film we want to watch is not on Netflix we have to subscribe to other applications" (Informant FA, April 2023).

According to informant LI, Netflix and other applications already have offers/rates that match the content "For the price it's appropriate, although each application has different rates. Because video streaming applications themselves also offer 'family' packages that are much more affordable than 'personal' packages." (Informant LI, May 2023). In addition to the rates offered, the informants also gave their opinions about how they or Gen Z avoid negative things about Netflix. Informant MAP believes that "By choosing shows according to age and selecting genres or shows that are more educational but still entertaining" (Informant MAP, April 2023). Informant FA also has a similar opinion to informant MAP, "Maybe we can be wiser in using Netflix, such as knowing limits when choosing and watching a show, which should be imitated and which should not be imitated in our daily lives" (Informant FA, April 2023).

Informant LI has an opinion on how Gen Z can avoid the negative influence of Netflix, "Building positive life patterns, such as filling free time to do other activities besides watching shows on video streaming applications. Because if we don't build positive life patterns, we will be easily influenced by negative things indirectly" (Informant LI, May 2023). From the statements above we can take the essence, that media convergence on the Netflix application has a fairly large role in various aspects of Gen Z daily life, from information sources, viewing patterns, shows on Netflix, and rates offered by Netflix. Thanks to the internet as well, streaming services like Netflix must continue to do media convergence continuously to survive in their industry.

5. Conclusion

This research concludes that media convergence within the Netflix application plays an important role in the daily lives of Gen Z. The convenience and flexibility offered—such as the ability to watch content anytime and anywhere have led many in Gen Z to prefer Netflix over traditional cinemas. Enhanced features within the app also support this shift. However, this preference does not mean Gen Z has entirely abandoned cinemas. The cinema experience, including large screens, superior audio quality, and access to exclusive premieres, continues to offer unique value that Netflix cannot fully replicate.

Gen Z demonstrates awareness of potential negative effects of excessive Netflix usage by selectively choosing content and maintaining a balanced lifestyle. They often engage in other activities to manage their screen time, showing that a positive routine can help prevent passive consumption. While Netflix is mainly used for entertainment, it also functions as an indirect source of information. In terms of affordability, Netflix offers various pricing tiers, including family packages, to accommodate different financial capabilities.

Overall, the internet has become the key enabler of media convergence, influencing how Gen Z consumes media and interacts with technology in daily life. This study recommends further research to explore the broader implications of media convergence across other platforms and demographic groups, to deepen understanding of its societal impact.

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