CHAPTER 1

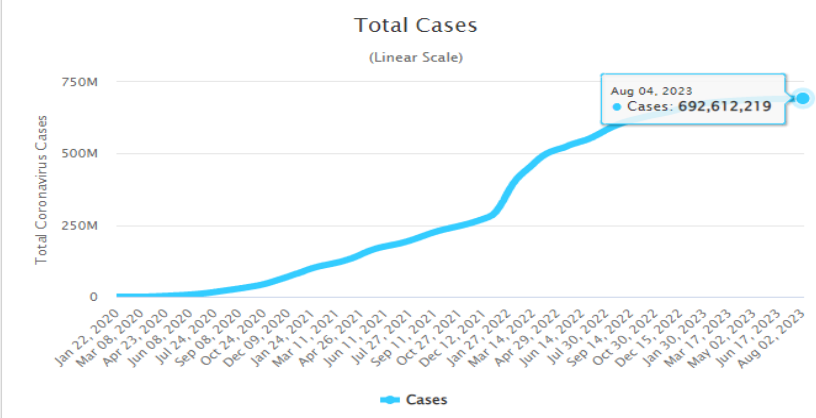
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Avoiding the risk of disease from an early age is very important, because maintaining health is a necessity for all human beings. To achieve optimal or prime immunity, immunization and vaccination are needed because this has been proven to be one of the most effective attempts to control and eliminate disease infection that results in death, stated Imran Agus Nurali (Director of Health Promotion and Community empowerment of Indonesian Ministry of Health) in (Kementerian Kesehatan RI, 2022).

But referring from Indonesia Ministry of Health's report, the low achievement of vaccination as well as immunization caused by Indonesia people's doubts and non-acceptance of that health program. Therefore, the communication strategy for (Public) receiving vaccinations and immunizations that must be considered is through public communication, behavior change of communication, community empowerment, capacity building vaccinators, cross-sector cooperation and various organizations (Irawati et al., 2020). So, analyze how to communicate the information of vaccine and immunization programs to the society, especially by knowing the characteristics of information seeking behavior in every group of people in Indonesian, play an important role in increasing awareness of vaccination and immunization programs. Particulary, this condition is mainly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

It started in 2020, people all around the world were shocked by new virus called Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), this virus has already affected 692,612,219 people around the world and the number of deaths is more than 6.9 million people, based on Worldometer's data on August 4th 2023 (Worldometers, 2023b). And those numbers are increase until today.



Picture 1.1 CUMULATIVE CASES

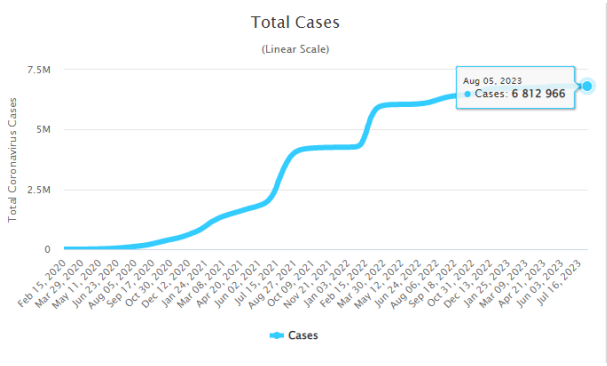
(Source: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/)

Based from COVID-19: The first Documented Coronavirus Pandemic in History (Liu et al., 2020), this virus that was first reported in Wuhan, China since late December 2019, because of a several pneumonia cases that increased. Then by March 2020, WHO (World Health Organization) declared that COVID-19 as a global pandemic after more than 400,000 cases of COVID-19 were recorded worldwide. The name of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) itself created by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the etiologic agent as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), (Paguio et al., 2020). Then now, COVID-19 has become the fifth documented pandemic after flu pandemic in 1918 and subsequently spread worldwide until today (Liu et al., 2020).

The Spread of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is through particle from large respiratory *Droplet* (saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes), air, contaminated surface and human waste (Enervon, 2020)) to smaller aerosols, when the infected person cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breath (WHO, 2022a). Most symptoms are fever, cough, tiredness as well as loss of taste or smell, but those can be worse to chest pain and difficulty breathing (WHO, 2022b). However, CNBC Indonesia quoted from WHO that the way the Coronavirus spreads can come from someone who is infected but doesn't show any symptoms and doesn't feel well. Most people (about 80%) recover from illness without needing special treatment, but about 1 out of 6 people who get COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and has difficulty breathing. Older people and those with medical problems such as high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness from it (Roy, 2020).

From the Covid19.go.id website (Covid-19, 2022), Indonesia is one of country from 232 countries that got infected by Coronavirus pandemic, the growth of people who got infected is pretty high. The first COVID-19 case in Indonesia was announced by the government on March 2nd, 2020, there were two cases of positive COVID-19 patients in Indonesia from Depok West Java. Based from Pandu Riono (Epidemiology Expert from *Universitas Indonesia*) in Kompas.com, Coronavirus (COVID-19) is most likely entered Indonesia on January 2020. The identification of the first case in early March was a local transmission and not an imported case. The entry of the virus is very likely to occur through gates (international flight) in several parts of Indonesia, because the virus has colonized various countries other than Wuhan in China since January 2020 (Pranita, 2020).

Since then, cases of positive COVID-19 in Indonesia are growing day by day and the virus is spreading in 34 provinces in Indonesia. There were 6,812,966 people who infected Coronavirus by August 5th 2023, those numbers (scale) have grown fluctuately until today (Worldometers, 2023a).



Picture 1.2 NATIONAL (INDONESIA) CUMULATIVE DATA

(Source: https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/indonesia/)

Because of that, most of social events that involve many people in one place are canceled. Several countries have reduced direct (offline) social gathering and enforce lockdown rules, even the government made new regulations specifically to dealing with COVID-19 situation. The Indonesian government has also created new protocols related to prevent the spreading of the COVID-19, such as using mask or personal protective equipment (APD: *Alat Pelindung Diri*) and social distancing. But Indonesia's government might not enact the lockdown rules yet, they created a social distancing program called PSBB (*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar*), which means the limitation of activities in certain area that suspected of being infected with COVID-

19. The PSBB provision was released by Indonesia Ministry of Health in Minister of Health Regulation Number 9 of 2020 (Putsanra, 2020).

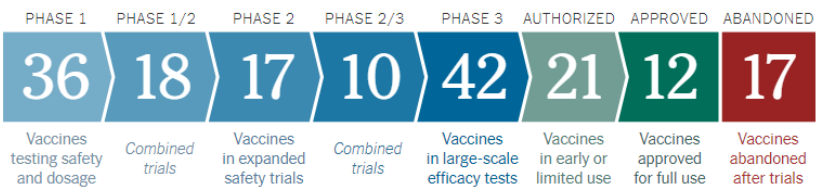
To maximize the New Normal conditions, which is the scenarios for accelerating the handling of COVID-19 in the health and socio-economic fields (Videlia, 2020). Science and technology were developing to deal with the outbreaks, not only just diagnostic tools or other supporting health tools. Based from World Health Organization's article (WHO, 2022c), WHO collaborating with international networks (The experts, researchers, national authorities, etc.) have been monitoring and assessing the evolution of SARS-CoV-2 since January 2020, because it is undeniable that the virus will continue to change over time. Even though most of changes has a little or even no impact to the virus's properties, but some of changes may affect the virus's properties, such as the performance of vaccines, the associated disease severity, how the virus spread, diagnostic tool or other public health and social measurement. Then finally, WHO and their partners have worked to discover, manufacture, and distribute safe and effective vaccinations, they believe that effective vaccine is a changing tool that would end the COVID-19 pandemic (WHO, 2019).

Tirto.id released that at first Joko Widodo as President of Republic Indonesia, pushed Indonesia researchers to find the COVID-19 vaccine in three months, but the idea was avoid and denied by researcher team from Medical Faculty of Padjajaran University. The process of making vaccine itself, takes time and must be tested by several stage, even the SARS and MERS vaccines were not completed until now, the Rubella vaccine was discovered within five years, while Smallpox was a pandemic for fifteen centuries. So, it is impossible to create and find the effective COVID-19 vaccine in very short time (Putri, 2020). Beside the process of making vaccine is need a long-time research and laboratory process, even after the vaccine (the drug/medicine) is being created, those vaccine must be gone through the Vaccine Testing Stages. Before being marketed, vaccines usually go through several stages of testing (Annistri, 2020). Quoted by The New York Times (Zimmer et al., 2022), These are the stages of testing vaccines in general:

1) Pre-clinical testing: Testing on animals, to determine how their body responds to the vaccine.
2) Phase I test (Safety trials): Testing on a few people, to determine the effect and safety of the vaccine.

3) Phase II test (Expanded trials): Testing widely, usually reaching hundreds of people of various ages. The goal is to determine the effectiveness of vaccines in stimulating the immune system.
4) Phase III test (Efficacy trials): Testing thousands of people to see if the vaccine really works against the virus. This stage is also usually done to see how many people are infected with the virus.
5) Early or limited approval: Many countries have procedure to providing emergency authorities for vaccine, based preliminary evidence that they are safe and effective. Even though the experts have warned of serious risk from jumping ahead to this result, but some country like China and Russia began administering vaccines before the Phase III test being public.
6) Approval: The final stage, where the regulator reviews the results of a vaccine trial and plans for manufacturing it. Then decide to give the full approval or not.
7) Combined phase: An acceleration stage, usually a combination of several testing phases.
8) Paused or Abandoned: The investigators could pause the trial, if their observation shows a symptom to the volunteer. Trial may also be abandoned if the vaccines didn't effective.

But in December 2020, WHO's Emergency Use Listing (EUL) opens the door for countries to expedite their own regulatory approval processes to import and administer the vaccine by making Pfizer/BioNTech as the first vaccine that receive emergency validation from WHO. The EUL assesses the feasibility, safety, efficacy, quality and a risk management plan of a vaccine from its clinical trial data. So WHO stipulates that companies producing COVID-19 vaccines must commit to generating data in order to be fully licensed and fulfill WHO qualification, also WHO allows each country to undertake a policy to decide whether and who will use the vaccine, with priorities determined for earliest use (WHO, 2020).



Picture 1.3 CORONAVIRUS VACCINE TRACKER

(Source: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/science/coronavirus-vaccine-tracker.html)

Throughout early 2020 to August 2022, researchers tested more than 120 vaccines in clinical trials underway that time. But only 12 of them are being approved for full use, most of them have passed the phase 3 and some other vaccines have used for emergency in some countries, based from The New York Times (Zimmer et al., 2022).

Finally, in early 2021 Indonesian government started and accelerate COVID-19 vaccination program to the public, so that group immunity in Indonesia can be formed (KOMINFO, 2021). In virtual press conference that held on September 28th 2020, Airlangga Hartarto as Chairman of the Committee for Handling COVID-19 and National Economic Recovery stated that the vaccination will started in 2021 and the Indonesia government is targeting 102,451,500 people to undergo the vaccine during 2021 (Bramasta, 2020). In Tirto.id article (Idhom, 2021), vaccines that in the National Vaccination Program in Indonesia that are listed in the Decree of the Minister of Health Number HK.01.07 / Menkes / 9860/2020. There are:

1) Sinovac

   Sinovac or Coronavac was produced by Sinovac Life Science, pharmaceutical company based in Beijing, China. Sinovac was already allowed to used by National Agency of Drug and Food Control (BPOM, Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan) and Islamic Ulema Council (MUI, Majelis Ulama Islam). Now it is only vaccine that has a distribution license in Indonesia.

2) Pfizer

   Comirnaty (also known as Tozinameran or BNT162b2)or we called Pfizer, is the result of collaboration between Pfizer (a US pharmaceutical company) and BioNTech (a German biotech company). based on the results of a study by United Nations experts, the Pfizer Vaccine is the first COVID-19 vaccine validated by the World Health Organization (WHO) to be included in the list of emergency vaccine uses.

3) AstraZeneca

   Derived from the collaboration of the University of Oxford with the British-Swedish company, AstraZeneca. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory

Agency (MHRA) has issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) permit for the AstraZeneca vaccine, pad.

4) Moderna

Entering Clinical Trial 3, Moderna was developed by a biotechnology company based in Boston, USA. With an efficacy rate of 94.5 percent, the Moderna vaccine received emergency use from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on 18 December 2020.

5) Novavax

Novavax was developed by a biotech company based in Maryland, United States of America. Using monkeys and humans, clinical trial phase 2 was successful. And starting December 30, 2020 clinical trial phase 3 takes place.

6) Sinopharm

The Beijing Institute of Biological Products developed a corona vaccine from a weakened virus. then clinically tested by one of China's state-owned companies, Sinopharm. Sinopharm's phase 3 clinical trials are being conducted in a number of countries other than China, including the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Jordan.

As symbolizes of COVID-19 vaccination program in Indonesia, that has started on January 13th 2021. The president of Republic Indonesia Joko Widodo had the first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine, reported by Tirto.id (Idhom, 2021). Based from Kompas.com (Bramasta, 2020). There are priority groups or groups in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in Indonesia, the following are the six priority groups of vaccine recipients:

1) Group 1: Medical team (Doctors, Nurse, Medical Volunteer,etc)
2) Group 2: People that contacted with COVID-19 patients
3) Group 3: People who work in the field of public services
4) Group 4: General public
5) Group 5: Teachers (Educator)
6) Group 6: Civil apparatus and legislature.

But in the midst of the Coronavirus Vaccine program from the government of the Republic of Indonesia, there are pros and cons responses from the public. There are people who support the vaccine program, but also there are some people who worry and even refuse to get vaccinated. There are some reasons why people being skeptic about using or getting COVID-19 vaccine, from doubting the effectiveness of the

vaccines, worrying about the side effects, debate over the halal content of the vaccines until believing the conspiracy theories that are rife in society (Caroline, 2021). Based from National Survey about COVID-19 Vaccine receiving that created by The Ministry of Health together with the Indonesian Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (ITAGI), the receipt of COVID-19 vaccine information is different for each person. The majority of Indonesians who have heard about COVI D-19 vaccine and they willing to accept it are groups of people with more information about the vaccines, meanwhile those who choose to not being vaccinated yet may has less information. Difference the acceptance rate of the COVID-19 vaccine provides evidence that society only need to have more knowledge of the vaccine information. (Rokom, 2021). It could be mean that people who do not have sufficient information about the COVID-19 vaccine will seek more information until that meets their information needs before they ready to get vaccinated.

David and Mary Tate (2004) explained that everyone are seeker and user of information, people constantly seek and use information as part of their daily life. Topic of the information are mostly based on people interest, like information that relating to work, economic, health and others or people needs. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected all sector and the way (system) of human life around the world, the up-to-date and factual information regarding health sector information is important to look more depth. Everyone needs, seeks, and uses health information in various ways, either indirectly, which passively receiving information from people or media (Passive searching category). Or directly, which when a person intentionally seek out the health information from various ways, such as from professional (Doctor, midwife, etc.), health care institution and from media (pawit M. and N. K. Yusup, 2014).

According from Thomas D. Wilson in Fathurrahman (Fathurrahman, 2016), Wilson propounded several factors that affecting someone behavior when they looking for information:

1) Psychological condition
2) Demography
3) The role of person in society
4) Environment that affects the person
5) Characteristic.

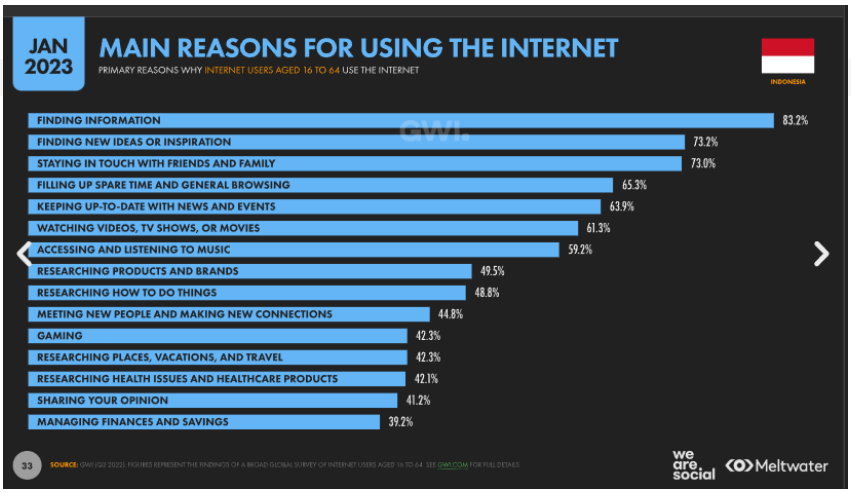
Those factors can influence how someone (finally) realizes the need for information in the form of information seeking behavior. Information seeking behavior itself is not directly change from information needs, but must be triggered first by a person's understanding of the pressures and problems in their life, which in here is COVID-19 issues.

Information is needed for the development of knowledge and technology (*IPTEK*), those can also produce another information. So with the development of knowledge and technology that are getting faster, the information is growing very quickly too (Fathurrahman, 2016). That's the reason why all information and countermeasures related with Coronavirus in Indonesia are handled by *Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan Virus Corona (Covid-19)* (Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Coronavirus Disease 2019), this institution created on March 13th 2020 based in Presidential Decree Number 7 of 2020. Reported from Kabar24.Bisnis.com, the aim is to coordinate inter-agency activities in effort to prevent and overcome the impact of the new coronavirus disease in Indonesia (Saeno, 2020). Which has now become institutions called *Komite Penanganan Covid-19 dan Pemulihan Ekonomi Nasional* (Committee for Handling COVID-19 and National Economic Recovery) started on July 20th 2020 based on Presidential Regulation Number 82 of 2020, they more focused on economic recovery and overcoming the 2019 coronavirus disease and the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, sourced from Kompas.TV (Kurniawan, 2020). They created www.covid19.go.id website and app named Peduli Lindungi to unify the accurate information into one source and facilitate access to the delivery information to the public, stated Doni Mardano (Head of *Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan Virus Corona)* in Antaranews (Prihantoro, 2020).

From the paragraph above, it shows that through new media every individual, mass media also the government seek and share information about the Coronavirus outbreak (Pramiyanti et al., 2020a), including the COVID-19 vaccination program. Basically, humans are the media that have the ability to convey the information. But humans have the limits to spread it out (personal), then media was found as a solution to spread the information widely. Along with the development of increasingly modern technology, the presence of new media and the Internet in particular has posed a challenge to conventional media (example: newspaper, magazine, etc (Prasanti, 2018a). New media is new tools are present, with the development of existing technology, the media

present to fulfill the information needs of society. New media also often referred to as the change in Analog technology to digital technology. Supported by internet, people can get the information from any part of the world easily through the media.

In Indonesia, the use of internet user and social media user have grown quite rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic times. According to research on social media management platform HootSuite and social marketing agency We Are Social, "Global Digital Reports 2023", there are 77% people in Indonesia already use internet connection. The number of internet users in Indonesia has reached 212,9 million people, while the total population of Indonesian is around 276,4 million. With 167 million active social media users, 83,2% of Indonesian internet users main reasons using it for finding information (Simon Kemp, 2023).

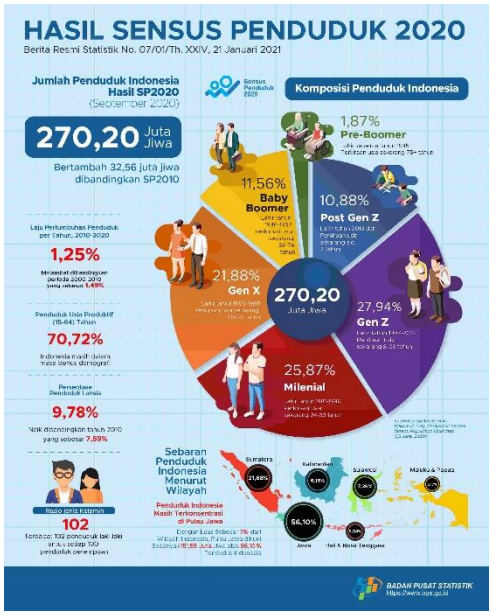


Picture 1.4 PERCENTAGE OF MAIN REASONS FOR INDONESIAN POPULATIONS USING THE INTERNET

(Source: https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-indonesia)

Global Digital Reports 2023 by HootSuite and We Are Social also describe the average age of social media users are between 18-34 years old, which can be conclude as Generation Z (Born between 1995-2010) and millennial (Born between 1977-1994) (Simon Kemp, 2023).

Based on the data above, the researcher will more focus on the use of social media on Generation Z (Gen Z). Not only because Gen Z is the majority of Indonesia's population, which is 27, 94% based on the results of the 2020 population census by *Badan Pusat Statistik* (Rakhmah & Azizah, 2020).

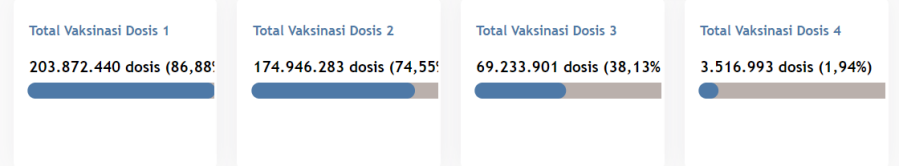


Picture 1.5 INDONESIA POPULATION CENSUS 2020

(Source: https://pskp.kemdikbud.go.id/produk/artikel/detail/3133/gen-z-dominan-apa-maknanya-bagi-pendidikan-kita)

Also because of Generation Z have grown up with technology, they make internet as their main source of information and it proofed by the large number of social networking sites that they use, how many accounts that they have and in which medias or sites (Dabija et al., 2018). So it can be conclude by Fietkiewicz, Lins, Baran, & Stock (2016), that "Generation Z has adopted the internet as their way of life and can be described as mobile natives that have significant differences digital media habits from older generations". Gen Z could be categorized as light users in term of the frequency and duration in receiving and sharing COVID-19-related information. Based From "Digital Media Use of Gen Z During COVID-19 Pandemic" (Pramiyanti et al., 2020a).

Therefore, this research will focus on discussing Generation Z information seeking behavior of COVID-19 vaccine on social media. Because COVID-19 has become a pandemic that causes delays or even cancellations of direct socialization activities, it changes all forms of "'normal" routine, communication and daily (living) habits. So that is why WHO (World Health Organization) stated that "Vaccines play an important role to reducing deaths and severe illness from COVID-19, and to reduce the transmission of COVID-19" (WHO, 2020). Unfortunately, even more that 70% of Indonesian have got dose one and dose two of COVID-19 vaccine, but less than 50% of them are not completing their COVID-19 vaccination yet (Dose three and dose four).



Picture 1.6 NATIONAL COVID-19 VACCINATION

(Source: https://vaksin.kemkes.go.id/#/vaccines)

So the way Gen Z as the majority of people in Indonesia, seek information about the COVID-19 vaccine on social media become an interesting and important communication phenomena that researcher think is still relevant to be research. Because the existence of new media plays an important role in the field of information and communication (receiving and disseminating information) in COVID-19 pandemic, within this unstable situation the role of vaccination is the cornerstone of prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 not only locally, but also globally (Del Rio & Malani, 2022).

Not only become a documented form, but also this research is going to show the urgency and will give new communication perspective about COVID-19 Vaccine issues. Within that, hopefully it can be awareness to prevent public misinformation and hoax about health information. Also, it can encourage people to complete all doses of the COVID-19 Vaccine. And for institution or governor, it can be an evaluation material to improve their communication strategies related to COVID-19, especially the COVID-19 vaccine.

The tittle of this research is Generation Z Health Information Seeking Behavior of COVID-19 Vaccine on Social Media, the researcher will use interpretative qualitative approach with interpretive qualitative method to process this research. Based from the background that have been written above, it concluded that this study will focus on the communication characteristic on Generation Z health information seeking behavior of COVID-19 Vaccine on social media. How Generation Z Starting, Chaining, Browsing, Differentiating, Monitoring, Extracting, Verifying and Ending the information of COVID-19 Vaccine in social media.

1.2 Research Purposes

The purpose of this research is to solve problems mentioned in the identification of problem, that is to knowing how Generation Z health information seeking behaviour of COVID-19 Vaccine on social media. So that the results of this study are able to show communication behavior in new media, especially the characteristics of Generation Z in seeking for information of the COVID-19 vaccine on social media.

1.3 Problem Formulation

Based on the background that has been decribed, the research must have a limitation and problem formulation of "How is the health information seeking behaviour of COVID-19 vaccine". Therefore, the researcher took the problem formulation research as follows:

1) How Generation Z health information seeking behaviour of COVID-19 Vaccine on social media?

1.4 Benefit of Research

1.4.1 Theoretical Benefit

Give more information related with COVID-19, especially about COVID-19's vaccine in communication aspect. And hopefully this reseach can be source or references in the field of communication, especially *new media* and *information seeking behaviour* in social media.

1.4.2 Practical Benefit

Hopefully the result of this research may have an impact to educate public about the importance of seeking and sorting information about COVID-19 Vaccine, also give awareness to prevent hoax around them. And expectantly health institution or governer may improve the health communication strategies, especially for promoting COVID-19 Vaccine in Indonesia.

1.5 Time Period of Research

Table 1.1 TABLE OF TIME PERIOD OF RESEARCH

No	Activity	Period of Time						
		November 2020 – January 2021	**February 2021**	**March 2021 – July 2021**	**July 2021 – January 2022**	**February 2022 – July 2022**	**July 2022 – June 2023**	**July 2023**
1	Determine the title of the research							
2	Writing process of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the research							
3	Conduct research guided by supervisors							
4	Desk Evaluation							
5	Desk Evaluation revision							
6	Informant interview (Online)							
7	Interview transcript process							
8	Writing process of Chapters 4 and 5 of the research							
9	Submission of thesis trial							

(*Source: The result of data processing by researcher*)