



Characteristics of Generation Z in the Utilization of Digital Storytelling Media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru

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ABSTRACT

Background: Digital technology has influenced how people obtain health information. Generation Z has grown in the digital era and is familiar with the internet and social media. Health communication should align with their characteristics and preferences. Digital Storytelling (DST) integrates narrative elements with multimedia components, including images, audio, and video. This study aims to identify Generation Z patient characteristics and describe DST media utilization at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru.

Methods: This study used a descriptive cross-sectional design conducted in April 2026. The population comprised 1,414 Generation Z outpatients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru. A sample of 93 respondents was selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using univariate analysis with frequency distributions and percentages.

Results: Among 93 respondents, most were aged 20–25 years (82.8%), female (68.8%), residing in Banjarbaru (76.3%), unemployed (77.4%), and had senior high school or equivalent education (53.8%). Most parents worked in the non-civil service sector (81.7%). Instagram was the most-used platform (60.2%), while 55.9% spent more than 60 minutes daily on social media. Most did not follow the hospital's Instagram account (83.9%) and had never seen its content (77.4%). Among viewers, 71.4% accessed content several times weekly. Furthermore, 79.6% perceived the hospital's DST media as engaging and attractive.

Conclusion: Generation Z patients were predominantly young adults, female, and Banjarbaru residents. Most had positive perceptions of DST media, indicating its potential as an effective medium for hospital health communication and promotion.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology has transformed how individuals access and engage with health-related information. The widespread use of the internet and social media has enabled rapid, convenient, and borderless access to information, shifting health communication from conventional media toward digital platforms ([Eysenbach, 2020](#)). Global data indicate that social media users reached approximately 5.04 billion in 2024, representing more than 62% of the world's population ([Kemp S., 2024](#)). In Indonesia, social media

penetration has also increased significantly, reaching 191.4 million users or 68.9% of the total population ([Abdurrohm aan et al., 2025](#)).

Generation Z, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, represents a cohort that has grown up in a fully digital environment. Their information-seeking behavior is strongly shaped by social media platforms, video-based content, and interactive digital services ([Fitrisia & Hosizah, 2025](#)). In Indonesia, Generation Z comprises approximately 88.9 million individuals, including around 1.45 million in South Kalimantan Province ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024](#)). This generation tends to prefer health information that is visually engaging, concise, interactive, and easy to understand ([Wardaliah, 2025](#)). From a health communication perspective, this reflects the importance of audience-centered strategies, where message effectiveness is influenced by the suitability of media formats. Consistent with Media Richness Theory, multimedia-based communication such as video, audio, and animation is more capable of conveying complex health information than text-based media due to its richer contextual cues.

Digital Storytelling (DST) is one such approach that aligns with these communication needs. DST integrates narrative structures with multimedia elements such as images, video, audio, and animation. It has been widely recognized in health communication for its ability to enhance message clarity, emotional engagement, and audience attention ([Widianingsih & Cahyani, 2020](#)). DST is commonly disseminated through social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube due to their high reach and interactivity ([Musfira et al, 2022](#)). In hospital settings, digital communication strategies including DST are integrated into Hospital Health Promotion programs aimed at improving public health literacy and increasing awareness of available health services ([Arvid & Ain, 2021](#)).

Despite its growing use, evidence regarding how Generation Z patients interact with hospital-based DST remains limited, particularly in the Indonesian context. Existing studies have largely focused on general social media engagement or the implementation of digital health campaigns, while empirical descriptions of Generation Z patient characteristics in relation to DST utilization in hospital outpatient settings are still scarce. In particular, there is limited evidence on how Generation Z patients are characterized based on their exposure to, interaction with, and utilization of hospital-based digital storytelling media. This gap highlights the need for descriptive evidence to support the optimization of digital health communication strategies in hospital services.

RSD Idaman Banjarbaru has implemented digital storytelling as part of its health promotion strategy through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, with Instagram serving as the primary channel. The hospital disseminates educational content, service information, patient testimonials, and narrative-based health messages. In 2025, the hospital recorded 86,403 outpatient visits, of which 9,134 (10.57%) were Generation Z patients. However, limited information is available regarding the characteristics of Generation Z patients in relation to their utilization of digital storytelling media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru.

To date, there is a lack of studies specifically examining Digital Storytelling (DST) implementation at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru among Generation Z patients. This gap is important to address as it provides baseline evidence on how Generation Z patients are characterized in their exposure to and utilization of DST within hospital-based health promotion. Such evidence may serve as a foundation for future research exploring the role of DST in strengthening patient engagement, trust, and healthcare service utilization behavior. Therefore, this study aimed to describe the characteristics of Generation Z patients in relation to the utilization of digital storytelling media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design to describe respondent characteristics and Digital Storytelling (DST) media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru ([Notoatmodjo, 2023](#)). The study was conducted in April 2026 at the Outpatient Department of RSD Idaman Banjarbaru. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of two sections: respondent characteristics and Digital Storytelling media.

The respondent characteristics examined included age, gender, place of residence, occupation, educational attainment, parents' occupation, duration of social media use, and frequency of exposure to content published through the official Instagram account of RSD Idaman Banjarbaru. Exposure to Digital Storytelling was defined as respondents' experience of accessing or viewing Digital Storytelling content disseminated through the hospital's official Instagram account.

The Digital Storytelling variable was measured using a questionnaire developed based on the core elements of Digital Storytelling. The indicators assessed included perspective, intention, personalization, dramatic question, engagement, articulation, soundtrack, economy, pacing, story mapping, visual expression, and meaningful content. Each indicator was evaluated using a dichotomous response format, categorized as attractive or unattractive. The overall assessment of Digital Storytelling media was determined based on the cumulative scores obtained across all indicators and subsequently classified into two categories: attractive and unattractive. The instrument had undergone validity and reliability testing and was deemed suitable for use in this study.

The study population consisted of all Generation Z patients who had utilized outpatient healthcare services at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru in January 2026, totaling 1,414 individuals. These population data served as the sampling frame, while data collection was carried out in April 2026. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in a minimum sample of 93 respondents. A purposive sampling technique was employed based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The inclusion criteria were Generation Z patients aged 20–28 years, individuals who had previously utilized or were currently utilizing healthcare services at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, active Instagram users, and those willing to participate in the study. The exclusion criteria included respondents who submitted incomplete questionnaires or withdrew from the study during the data collection process.

Eligible respondents were provided with information regarding the study objectives and procedures prior to questionnaire administration. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. All completed questionnaires were reviewed to ensure data completeness before proceeding with data processing and analysis.

Data were analyzed using univariate analysis. Frequency distributions and percentages were used to describe respondent characteristics and Digital Storytelling media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru ([Sugiyono, 2022](#)). The findings were presented in tables and descriptive narratives to facilitate data interpretation. Ethical principles were maintained throughout the study. Respondents' confidentiality was strictly protected, and all information collected was used solely for research purposes.

RESULTS

This study involved 93 Generation Z outpatient respondents at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru who met the established eligibility criteria. Data collection was conducted in April 2026. The respondents were analyzed based on several characteristics, including age, gender, place of residence, occupation, educational attainment, parents' occupation, most frequently used social media platform, duration of social media use, following status of the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram account, exposure to content published on the hospital's Instagram account, frequency of exposure to the hospital's Instagram content, and respondents' perceptions of the digital storytelling media utilized by RSD Idaman Banjarbaru.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Age	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Young Adults (20–25 Years)	77	82,8
Adults (26–28 Years)	16	17,2

Total	93	100
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Source: Primary data, 2026

The findings revealed that most respondents belonged to the 20–25 years age group, comprising 77 individuals (82.8%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Gender among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026.

Gender	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Male	29	31,2
Female	64	68,8
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

The findings revealed that most respondents were female, accounting for 64 individuals (68.8%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Tabel 3. Distribusi Frekuensi Responden berdasarkan Domisili pada Pasien Gen-Z di RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Place of Residence	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Banjarbaru	71	76,3
Outside Banjarbaru	22	23,7
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents resided in Banjarbaru, comprising 71 individuals (76.3%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Occupation among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Occupation	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Employed	21	22,6
Unemployed	72	77,4
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents were unemployed, comprising 72 individuals (77.4%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Educational Attainment among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Educational Attainment	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Completed Primary School	2	2,2
Completed Junior High School	4	4,3
Completed Senior High School	50	53,8
Diploma III Degree	21	22,6
Bachelor's Degree	15	16,1
Master's Degree	1	1,1
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Most respondents had completed senior high school as their highest educational attainment, accounting for 50 individuals (53.8%) of the total sample (n = 93). This was followed by respondents who had completed a Diploma III degree, comprising 21 individuals (22.6%), and those who had attained a bachelor's degree, comprising 15 individuals (16.1%).

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Parents' Occupation among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Parents' Occupation	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Civil Servant	17	18,3
Non-Civil Servant	76	81,7
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Most respondents had parents who were employed in the non-civil service sector, accounting for 76 individuals (81.7%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 7. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Most Frequently Used Social Media Platform among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Most Frequently Used Social Media Platform	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Facebook	2	2,2
Instagram	56	60,2
WhatsApp	2	2,2
Twitter/X	1	1,1
TikTok	32	34,4
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Most respondents reported Instagram as their most frequently used social media platform, accounting for 56 individuals (60.2%) of the total sample (n = 93), while 32 respondents (34.4%) reported TikTok as their most frequently used platform.

Table 8. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Average Daily Duration of Social Media Use among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Daily Duration of Social Media Use	Frekuensi	
	n	%
15-30 minutes	21	22,6
45-60 minutes	20	21,5
> 60 minutes	52	55,9
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

The majority of respondents reported spending more than 60 minutes per day on social media, comprising 52 individuals (55.9%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 9. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Following Status of the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram Account among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Following Status of the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram Account	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Yes	15	16,1
No	78	83,9
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Most respondents did not follow the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram account, accounting for 78 individuals (83.9%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 10. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Exposure to Content on the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram Account among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Exposure to Content on the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram Account	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Yes	21	22,6
No	72	77,4
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Most respondents had not been exposed to content on the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram account, accounting for 78 individuals (83.9%) of the total sample (n = 93).

Table 11. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Frequency of Exposure to Content on the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram Account among Generation Z Patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Frequency of Exposure to Content on the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram Account	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Several Times per Week	15	71,4
Several Times per Month	3	14,3
Rarely (Less Than Once per Month)	3	14,3
Total	21	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Among the 21 respondents who had been exposed to content on the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram account, most reported viewing the content several times per week, accounting for 15 individuals (71.4%).

Table 12. Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Perceptions of Digital Storytelling Media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru, 2026

Perceptions of Digital Storytelling Media	Frekuensi	
	n	%
Attractive	74	79,6
Not Attractive	19	20,4
Total	93	100

Source: Primary data, 2026

Most respondents perceived the Digital Storytelling (DST) media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru as attractive, accounting for 74 individuals (79.6%) of the total sample (n = 93).

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the respondents were predominantly young adults belonging to Generation Z, with the majority being female, having completed senior high school education, and currently studying or attending higher education institutions. Most respondents resided in Banjarbaru and came from diverse family occupational backgrounds. These characteristics reflect a population that has grown up in a highly digitalized environment and possesses substantial exposure to information and communication technologies. Generation Z is widely recognized as a digital-native generation that has developed alongside rapid technological advancement, making digital platforms an integral part of daily life ([Fitrisia & Hosizah, 2025](#)). [Wardaliah \(2025\)](#) further explained that Generation Z demonstrates strong adaptability to digital technology and actively utilizes online platforms to obtain various forms of information, including health-related information. These findings are also consistent with [Siregar et al., \(2024\)](#), who reported that active social media users are predominantly individuals in late adolescence and early adulthood. As active consumers of digital content, individuals in this age group are more frequently exposed to

visual and interactive media, making them a suitable audience for Digital Storytelling (DST)-based health communication.

Educational attainment influences an individual's ability to access, understand, and evaluate health information ([Notoatmodjo, 2023](#)), while family and socioeconomic environments may shape access to digital resources and technology utilization ([Meilinda, N., Malinda, F., & Aisyah, 2020](#)). Previous studies have also suggested that women tend to demonstrate greater interest in seeking health-related information than men, leading to higher engagement with health communication content ([Rosini dan Siti Nurningsih, 2018](#); [Wang et al., 2019](#)). Furthermore, domicile and geographic proximity may influence healthcare utilization and access to health-related information ([Hajek et al., 2021](#)). The predominance of respondents residing in Banjarbaru suggests easier access to healthcare services and greater opportunities to encounter information disseminated by RSD Idaman Banjarbaru. The findings also showed that most respondents were not formally employed, which may contribute to greater opportunities for social media use and online information seeking ([Nugraheni dan Widyaningrum, 2017](#)). Collectively, these demographic characteristics interact to shape health information-seeking behavior among Generation Z and create a population that is receptive to digital innovations, including DST as a health communication strategy.

The study further revealed that Instagram was the most frequently used social media platform among respondents, and most participants reported intensive daily social media use. Previous studies have identified Instagram as one of the most preferred social media platforms among Generation Z because of its visual, interactive, and user-friendly nature ([Steven dan Pribadi, 2022](#); [et al., 2022](#)) [Sumarni](#). High levels of social media use among Generation Z have also been associated with their familiarity with digital technology and continuous engagement with online content ([Nurlina et al., 2022](#)). Despite this high level of social media engagement, a considerable proportion of respondents did not follow the official Instagram account of RSD Idaman Banjarbaru and reported limited exposure to the hospital's content. Media Engagement Theory suggests that exposure to digital content is influenced not only by the intensity of social media use but also by content relevance, user preferences, platform algorithms, and audience interaction patterns ([Hidayatullah, B. S., & Winduwati, 2023](#)). [Ghazali & Samaria \(2024\)](#) reported that Generation Z users tend to selectively follow accounts that align with their personal interests and information needs.

The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by [Ghazali & Samaria \(2024\)](#), who found that high social media use does not necessarily translate into active engagement with institutional health accounts. However, the present findings differ from those [Hariyanti](#) of , [Fitriasari, Pradana, & Lenggono \(2024\)](#), who reported a positive relationship between intensive social media use and exposure to digital health information. This discrepancy may be explained by differences in audience segmentation, institutional social media strategies, content relevance, and opportunities for audience engagement. [Hu \(2015\)](#) emphasized that effective digital health communication depends on the interaction between communication channels, audience characteristics, message quality, and engagement strategies rather than on platform utilization alone. Therefore, intensive social media use among Generation Z does not automatically result in higher exposure to health information unless the content is perceived as relevant, meaningful, and responsive to audience needs. The low exposure observed in this study may also indicate that health information disseminated by healthcare institutions competes with a large volume of digital content consumed daily by Generation Z users. Consequently, the effectiveness of digital health communication depends not only on selecting an appropriate platform but also on developing audience-centered content that is engaging, accessible, and aligned with users' preferences.

The findings also demonstrated that the Digital Storytelling media developed by RSD Idaman Banjarbaru was generally perceived as attractive by respondents. Positive evaluations were particularly evident in dimensions such as engagement, soundtrack, minimalism, pacing, and story mapping, whereas the perspective and personal dimensions received comparatively lower ratings. Digital Storytelling has been described as a communication approach that combines narrative elements, visual media, audio components, and digital technology to enhance audience

attention and message comprehension ([Musfira et al., 2022](#)). A systematic review conducted by [West et al., \(2022\)](#) demonstrated that Digital Storytelling is an effective health communication approach because it enhances audience engagement, facilitates knowledge translation, promotes reflection, and strengthens the communication of health experiences across diverse populations. According to Narrative Communication Theory, stories facilitate emotional engagement and allow audiences to connect more deeply with the information being communicated, thereby improving message retention and understanding. [Wismashanti, R. A., et al., \(2023\)](#) further reported that narrative-based health communication is generally more memorable, emotionally engaging, and persuasive than conventional information delivery because narratives encourage audiences to relate health messages to their personal experiences and values. Furthermore, Media Engagement Theory emphasizes that the integration of visual, auditory, and narrative elements can strengthen audience involvement and increase the effectiveness of communication processes.

The positive perception of DST observed in this study is consistent with previous research demonstrating that storytelling-based communication approaches are more effective in attracting audience attention and facilitating information processing than traditional informational methods ([Hariyanti et al., 2024; Musfira et al., 2022](#)). Favorable evaluations of engagement, soundtrack, minimalism, pacing, and story mapping suggest that respondents appreciated content that was visually appealing, well-structured, concise, and easy to follow. These characteristics align closely with the information consumption preferences of Generation Z, who tend to favor interactive, visually oriented, and rapidly accessible content. This interpretation is further supported by [et al., \(2022 Rahman\)](#), who found that visual and interactive content is more effective in attracting audience attention and increasing engagement on social media platforms. However, the relatively lower ratings observed for the perspective and personal dimensions differ from findings reported in several previous studies, which identified personalization as one of the key strengths of Digital Storytelling in fostering audience engagement. One possible explanation is that the DST content evaluated in this study focused primarily on delivering general health information rather than presenting personal experiences, patient narratives, or situations that closely reflected the daily realities of the target audience. This interpretation is consistent with Narrative Transportation Theory, which suggests that audiences become more engaged and responsive when they perceive stories as personally relevant and emotionally meaningful [Van Laer, T., et al., \(2019\)](#). Consequently, although respondents positively evaluated the technical and structural aspects of the stories, stronger personalization may be necessary to maximize emotional engagement, narrative transportation, and message effectiveness. Incorporating authentic patient experiences, testimonials, and narratives that resonate with the experiences of Generation Z may therefore enhance emotional engagement and increase the perceived relevance of health messages.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling is shaped by the interaction between audience characteristics and media-related factors. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, educational background, occupation, parental occupation, and place of residence interact with digital behavior variables, including Instagram use, duration of social media engagement, account-following behavior, content exposure, and viewing frequency, to influence how Generation Z accesses, interprets, and evaluates health information. These findings support the principles of digital health communication, which emphasize the importance of aligning communication strategies with audience characteristics, media preferences, and message design. The combination of high social media utilization and positive perceptions of Digital Storytelling indicates that narrative-based digital communication has considerable potential as a health promotion and education strategy for Generation Z. Nevertheless, the relatively limited exposure to the hospital's social media content suggests that improvements in content distribution and audience engagement strategies remain necessary. Healthcare organizations should therefore prioritize the development of personalized, interactive, and audience-centered content to maximize the reach and effectiveness of digital health communication initiatives.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the descriptive cross-sectional design does not allow causal relationships to be established between respondent characteristics and perceptions of Digital Storytelling media. Second, the use

of purposive sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader Generation Z populations beyond RSD Idaman Banjarbaru. Third, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to recall bias and social desirability bias. Finally, exposure to social media content was assessed based on respondents' perceptions rather than objective social media analytics. Future studies are recommended to employ analytical research designs, larger and more diverse samples, and objective measures of digital engagement to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in health communication.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study findings, Generation Z patients at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru were predominantly aged 20–25 years, female, residing in Banjarbaru, unemployed, and had completed senior high school as their highest educational attainment. Instagram was identified as the most frequently used social media platform, with a daily usage duration of more than 60 minutes. Most respondents did not follow the RSD Idaman Banjarbaru Instagram account and had never been exposed to the hospital's published content. Nevertheless, the digital storytelling (DST) media at RSD Idaman Banjarbaru was perceived as attractive by the majority of respondents.

These findings indicate that digital storytelling has the potential to serve as a health promotion medium that is aligned with the characteristics of Generation Z. It is expected that RSD Idaman Banjarbaru can optimize the utilization of digital storytelling media by improving content quality, creativity, and reach on social media platforms so that health information can be delivered more effectively to Generation Z.

Authors' Contribution Statement

Muhammad Zaidan: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, and Writing – Original Draft. Kusnindyah Praedevy Reviagana: Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Resources, Writing – Review & Editing, and Project Administration.

Both authors contributed substantially to the research process and manuscript development. They reviewed the final manuscript critically, approved its final version, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors confirm that there are no conflicts of interest associated with the publication of this manuscript. There are no financial, professional, personal, institutional, or other affiliations that could have affected the conduct of the study or influenced the interpretation and presentation of its findings. The research and manuscript preparation were undertaken objectively and independently to preserve the academic integrity of the study.

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