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The Strategic Role of Generation Z as Digital Human Resources in Increasing the Economic Value of Natural Resource Products in the Digital Era

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Abstract

Indonesia is a country rich in natural resources and holds significant potential to support economic development. However, the utilization of these resources is often limited to the sale of raw materials, resulting in relatively low economic value. In the digital era, Generation Z has emerged as a human resource (HR) with high technological capabilities, creativity, and innovation, capable of increasing the economic value of natural resource-based products. This study aims to analyze the strategic role of Generation Z as digital HR in increasing the economic value of natural resource-based products in the digital era. The research method used was a literature review with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were obtained from various sources such as scientific journals, books, government reports, and relevant publications. The results indicate that Generation Z plays a significant role in increasing the economic value of natural resource-based products through the use of digital technology, digital marketing, product innovation, e-commerce, and the development of digital entrepreneurship. With their digital capabilities, Generation Z can expand markets, increase the competitiveness of local products, and create higher added value for natural resource-based products. Therefore, improving the digital literacy and entrepreneurial skills of Generation Z is a crucial factor in supporting sustainable natural resource-based economic development.

Keywords: Generation Z, Digital Human Resources, Natural Resources, Economic Value, Digital Era.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is rich in natural resources. Various sectors such as agriculture, plantation crops, fisheries, forestry, and mining offer significant potential that can be utilized to improve public welfare and national economic growth. However, many natural resource products are still marketed as raw materials, resulting in relatively low economic added value. This situation results in the economic potential of natural resources being underutilized. The rapid development of information and communication technology has brought about significant changes in various aspects of life, including the economic sector. Digital transformation has opened up new opportunities in the management, marketing, and development of natural resource-based products. Digital technology enables businesses to expand market reach, increase production efficiency, and create innovative products with higher added value.

In this context, human resources (HR) are a key factor in determining the successful utilization of digital technology. One group with significant potential to navigate these developments is Generation Z. Generation Z was born and raised amidst advances in digital technology, thus possessing a high adaptability to the use of the internet, social media, and various digital platforms. The creative, innovative, and technologically savvy characteristics of Generation Z make them crucial actors in the development of the digital economy. Their ability to utilize technology can be used to increase the economic value of natural resource products through digital marketing, branding, product innovation, and the use of various e-commerce platforms. Through the use of digital technology, natural resource-based products that previously had low sales value can be transformed into high-value products that can compete in both national and international markets. Therefore, the role of Generation Z as digital human resources is crucial in supporting the increase in the economic value of natural resource products in the digital era. Based on this explanation, this study aims to analyze the strategic role of Generation Z as digital human resources in increasing the economic value of natural resource products in the digital era.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a literature review approach. This approach was chosen because the research objective is to analyze and describe the strategic role of Generation Z as digital human resources in increasing the economic value of natural resource products based on various relevant scientific sources. The literature review allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of the concepts, theories, and findings of previous research related to Generation Z, the digital economy, and natural resource management. The

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data used in this study is secondary data sourced from various references, such as national and international scientific journals, reference books, government reports, publications from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), reports from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, scientific articles, and various other reliable sources relevant to the research topic. This data was selected for its credibility, supporting the analysis of the relationship between Generation Z's digital capabilities and the increasing economic value of natural resource products.

The research stages include:

1. **Data Collection**

   The first stage is data collection through a review of various literature related to the research topic. Researchers collected information from scientific journals, books, research articles, government agency reports, and other official publications discussing Generation Z, digital transformation, digital entrepreneurship, natural resources, and the digital economy. Data collection was conducted systematically to obtain accurate information and support the research objectives.

2. **Data Identification and Selection**

   The collected data was then identified and selected based on its relevance to the research focus. At this stage, the researcher grouped various pieces of information into several main themes, such as Generation Z characteristics, digital competency, digital marketing, natural resource-based product innovation, e-commerce utilization, and digital entrepreneurship. The selection process was carried out to ensure that the data used truly supports the research discussion.

3. **Data Analysis**

   The selected data was then analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The analysis was conducted by reviewing, comparing, and interpreting various pieces of information obtained from literature sources. The researcher sought to identify the relationship between Generation Z's digital capabilities and efforts to increase the economic value of natural resource products. The results of the analysis were presented systematically to provide a clear picture of Generation Z's role in the development of a natural resource-based digital economy.

4. **Collection and Conclusion Drawing**

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The final stage was compiling the research results and drawing conclusions. Conclusions were based on the previously conducted data analysis. At this stage, researchers formulated key findings regarding the contribution of Generation Z as digital human resources in increasing the added value of natural resource products through the use of digital technology, innovation, digital marketing, and entrepreneurship. The conclusions obtained are expected to serve as a reference for policy development and further research related to natural resource management and strengthening digital human resources in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Generation Z as Digital Human Resources in Natural Resource Product Development

Generation Z is a group born and raised amidst the rapid development of information and communication technology. Unlike previous generations who had to adapt to digital technology, Generation Z has been accustomed to using the internet, social media, smart devices (smartphones), and various digital applications from an early age. This has given Generation Z a relatively higher level of digital literacy compared to previous generations. The digital literacy skills possessed by Generation Z are crucial for navigating the development of the digital economy. Digital literacy encompasses not only the ability to use technology but also the ability to search, process, evaluate, and utilize information effectively to support economic activities. In the context of natural resource management, these skills enable Generation Z to develop various innovative strategies to increase the added value of natural resource-based products.

In addition to possessing strong technological skills, Generation Z is also known for being creative, innovative, and adaptable to change. These characteristics are crucial for facing the challenges of an increasingly competitive global economy. Generation Z is able to identify business opportunities arising from developments in digital technology and integrate them with the potential of natural resources in their surroundings. Generation Z's role as digital talents extends beyond technology use to innovation, transforming natural resource products into products with higher economic value. By leveraging digital technology, Generation Z can develop marketing strategies, improve product quality, build brands, and expand market access, thereby increasing the competitiveness of local products.

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Leveraging Digital Marketing to Increase the Economic Value of Natural Resource Products

One concrete contribution of Generation Z in increasing the economic value of natural resource products is through the use of digital marketing. Digital marketing is a marketing strategy that utilizes internet technology and digital media to introduce products to consumers more widely and efficiently. The development of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp Business has opened up significant opportunities for businesses to market their products without incurring significant promotional costs. Generation Z, highly familiar with social media, is able to utilize these various platforms as effective promotional tools.

For example, local coffee products previously sold only in a few regions can be introduced to consumers across the region and even internationally through engaging digital content. Short videos showing the coffee harvesting process, processing techniques, and product presentation can increase consumer interest in the product. The same principle can be applied to agriculture, fisheries, and other natural resource-based crafts. Besides expanding market reach, digital marketing also allows businesses to gain direct feedback from consumers. Social media interactions can be leveraged to identify consumer needs and preferences, allowing businesses to continuously improve and innovate their products. Thus, digital marketing serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a means to build closer relationships with consumers and sustainably increase the economic value of natural resource products.

Natural Resource-Based Product Innovation as a Source of Added Value

The increase in a product's economic value is greatly influenced by the level of innovation applied in its processing and marketing. Generation Z has the ability to create various innovations that can transform low-value natural resource products into products with higher sales value. For example, cassava, previously sold only in its raw form, can be processed into premium chips with various flavors and modern packaging. These products are sold at a much higher price than raw cassava. Similarly, agricultural products such as cocoa can be processed into packaged chocolate, chocolate drinks, or other processed products with greater economic value.

Innovation can also be applied to product packaging. Attractive, informative, and environmentally friendly packaging can improve consumer perception of product quality. In the digital era, attractive packaging design also plays a crucial role in successful marketing through social media, as it can enhance a product's visual appeal. In addition to product and packaging innovations, Generation Z is also capable of developing innovations in service systems, digital

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payment methods, and product distribution strategies. These innovations can increase consumer satisfaction and strengthen a product's position in the market. Therefore, the innovative capabilities possessed by Generation Z are one of the main factors in increasing the added value and competitiveness of natural resource-based products.

Leveraging E-Commerce to Expand Market Access

The development of e-commerce has shifted trade patterns from traditional systems to more effective and efficient digital systems. Generation Z uses various e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, TikTok Shop, and other digital platforms to market natural resource-based products. The existence of e-commerce provides opportunities for businesses to reach a wider market without the need for a physical store. Products produced from various regions can be marketed to consumers throughout Indonesia and even abroad simply through digital platforms. In addition to increasing market access, e-commerce also simplifies the transaction process. Consumers can buy anytime and anywhere, while businesses can manage sales more efficiently through integrated digital systems.

The use of e-commerce also increases the competitiveness of local products. Natural resource-based products, previously unknown to the public, now have an equal opportunity to compete with other products in the digital marketplace. With the support of the right marketing strategy, local products can achieve higher economic value and contribute to increased community income.

Digital Entrepreneurship as a Driver of a Natural Resource-Based Economy

Digital entrepreneurship is an economic activity that utilizes digital technology as the primary means of conducting business. Generation Z has great potential to become digital entrepreneurs because they possess strong technological skills and the courage to explore new business opportunities. In natural resource management, digital entrepreneurship can be implemented by developing businesses that utilize local potential as the main raw material. For example, agricultural products can be processed into processed foods, fishery products can be made into frozen foods, and plantation products can be turned into cosmetics or health products with high sales value.

The presence of young digital-based entrepreneurs has a significant economic impact. In addition to creating new jobs, entrepreneurial activities can also increase community incomes and drive regional economic growth. The more Generation Z members involved in digital entrepreneurship, the greater the opportunity to increase the economic value of natural

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resource products in Indonesia. Furthermore, digital entrepreneurship also supports the creation of a more inclusive economy by providing opportunities for people from various regions to participate in digital economic activities without being hindered by geographic location.

Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Natural Resource Products in the Digital Era

Despite its significant potential, Generation Z's role in increasing the economic value of natural resource products still faces various obstacles. One major obstacle is the unequal distribution of internet access and digital infrastructure across various regions in Indonesia. This situation makes it difficult for some to fully utilize digital technology. Other obstacles include limited business capital, low business management skills, and high levels of competition in the digital marketplace. Many young entrepreneurs possess creative ideas but are hampered by a lack of resources and experience in fully developing their businesses.

However, the opportunities available are also enormous. Government support through digital transformation programs, digital MSME development, entrepreneurship training, and access to business financing can encourage Generation Z to develop natural resource-based products. Furthermore, technological developments such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are also creating new opportunities in the management and marketing of natural resource products. By optimally leveraging these opportunities, Generation Z can become a driving force for a more modern, innovative, and sustainable natural resource-based economic transformation. Ultimately, Generation Z's success in managing natural resource potential through digital technology will have a positive impact on national economic growth and improve people's welfare.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that Generation Z plays a highly strategic role as digital human resources in increasing the economic value of natural resource products in the digital era. Generation Z's ability to master information and communication technology, utilize digital media, and adapt to technological developments are key assets in driving economic transformation based on natural resources. These capabilities enable Generation Z to be not only technology users but also innovators capable of creating added value for various natural resource-based products. The use of digital technology through digital marketing, e-commerce, and various other digital platforms has proven effective in expanding market access, increasing marketing efficiency, and introducing local products to a wider consumer base. By utilizing social media and marketplaces, natural resource-based products

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previously known only locally can now be marketed nationally and even internationally. This demonstrates that digital technology can be an effective tool for increasing the competitiveness and economic value of natural resource products.

Furthermore, Generation Z also plays a crucial role in creating product innovations that can increase the added value of natural resources. Through their creativity, Generation Z is able to transform natural resources into more valuable, higher-quality products that meet the needs and preferences of modern consumers. Innovation in product, packaging, branding, and service aspects is a crucial factor in increasing selling prices and strengthening a product's position in the market. Generation Z's role in digital entrepreneurship also has a positive impact on economic development. The presence of young digital-based entrepreneurs can not only create new jobs but also contribute to increasing community incomes, empowering local potential, and driving regional economic growth. By leveraging the potential of available natural resources, Generation Z can become agents of change, connecting Indonesia's rich natural resources with the increasingly rapid development of digital technology.

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