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# Smart Thinking, Free Expression: Youth as Law-abiding Agents of Change

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BILQIS FARANADILA<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research is to provide a solution to increase legal awareness for the younger generation. Teenagers as agents of change are direct role models for their surroundings. They can inspire the surrounding environment to be sensitive to issues that are developing in Indonesia, change people's attitudes so they can comply with legal regulations properly, and influence public policy. Good manners must be instilled in the education curriculum in shaping the character of the younger generation so that they are aware and obey the law through a joint policy between the Ministry of Law and Human Rights and the Ministry of Education and Culture.*

**Keywords:** *Teenagers, Law, Curriculum.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The younger generation is the future of a nation. The quality of today's youth determines the future of Indonesia. As teenagers, they have the potential to see legal injustice, identify weaknesses in the legal system, and articulate their aspirations and thoughts in innovative ways. The potential that adolescents have in analyzing and conveying aspirations is very much needed today.

Through freedom of expression they can create a strong foundation to participate in policy formulation and advocacy on various issues that are developing in Indonesia. Coupled with the availability of various media platforms to convey their aspirations. Through this, it is not only sufficient for human rights of expression but also a means for Indonesia to be more advanced with the aspirations they convey.

Teenagers as agents of change become role models for their surroundings directly. They can inspire the surrounding environment to be sensitive to issues that are developing in Indonesia, change people's attitudes so they can comply with legal regulations properly, and influence public policy. Freedom of expression for adolescents must also be in line with the responsibilities and limitations of applicable law. Adolescents' right to expression must pay attention to protection from negative influences, such as the spread of hate, harassment, or

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<sup>1</sup> Author is a student at SMAN 1 Batu, Jawa Timur, Indonesia.

violence.

### **(A) Problem Statement**

Teenagers can be agents of change in society. Data from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) shows that youth political participation can vary across countries, with around 40% of countries involving youth in elections. These facts show that teenagers have a big influence on state political policies. They bring a perspective of enthusiasm, and passion that can motivate others and drive change.

Enthusiasm in expressing his opinion is very good for teenagers to have. However, enthusiasm without knowing the legal principles of the State of Indonesia will have bad consequences. The State of Indonesia is a country that positions law as the basis for regulating the life of society, nation and state. For example, Article 310 paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code provides information that for all people who defame someone in public, they will be punished with crime.

## **II. DISCUSSION**

Teenagers as agents of change have a crucial role in shaping the future of society. The ability to think smartly is the main foundation for teenagers to understand complex social issues and find innovative solutions. However, there are still many teenagers who carry out acts of free expression that exceed the limits, this is due to several factors. The author and researcher will describe in 2 points, namely:

- Emotional immaturity and poor mental health conditions make it difficult for adolescents to manage their feelings.

Reacting opinions without considering the impact on self-expression, including excessive and provocative acts of free expression. To overcome this problem, it is necessary to have emotional support and open communication from parents, educators and the community so that adolescents can manage their emotions better, wisely and feel valued when voicing their aspirations.

- Teenagers lack knowledge about the consequences of each behavior.

Many teenagers experience a lack of knowledge about the law regarding limits on expression. Even though teenagers must realize that any action that violates the law can result in legal sanctions. Thus, adolescents need to understand the limits of free expression and avoid actions that can harm themselves or others and not violate applicable laws.

In this regard, the analysis related to the problem is described as follows:

### **1. Legislative Function**

The first policy is to encourage the DPR RI to optimize and provide an educational approach regarding legal sanctions if freedom of expression exceeds the limit as follows:

- ITE Law Article 28 Paragraph 2 (Regarding racism insults)
- Criminal Code Article 310 paragraph 1 (Regarding defamation)
- Criminal Code Article 160 (Regarding acts of provocation)

Through this policy, it is hoped that youth will be able to express opinions in accordance with the standards set by law in Indonesia.

### **2. Budget Function**

The second policy is to encourage the DPR RI to allocate a budget for youth education and training. Through the DPR RI with the assistance of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture and the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights to facilitate educational training on law and emotional intelligence, this will help them understand the importance of obeying the law and the consequences of actions that violate the law. By paying special attention to legal education, critical thinking skills, and providing an understanding of the law, examples of laws that need to be understood are ITE Law article 27 paragraph 2 and RKUHP Article 310 paragraph 1 so that they do not violate existing laws.

### **3. Oversight Function**

The third policy that can be carried out is to review and evaluate the national education curriculum so that they understand the law from the Ministry of Education and Culture so that all students or youth get learning that sharpens critical thinking, has emotional intelligence and free expression but still implements the laws that have been in force.

## **III. CONCLUSION**

Teenagers as agents of change have an important role in shaping the future of society by thinking intelligently and expressing themselves freely. Even so, obeying the law remains an inseparable foundation. Therefore, teenagers really need the role of the Indonesian Parliament, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights in an effort to improve the quality of youth for the

advancement of the Indonesian state. In addition, the researcher has a support program for adolescents that directs and facilitates youth for free expression while still complying with the laws in force in Indonesia. A program from a youth for youth that is exclusively engaged in the field of freedom of expression so that youth can participate in conveying their aspirations while obeying the law. This program is called SANTUN (All Children Obey the Law) through this program it is hoped that it will become a forum for all youth in Indonesia to express their aspirations.

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