

Adolescents' Perception of *Gabut*: A Study of Indigenous Psychology in Indonesia

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Abstract

Slang language or slang is a variation of literature with the formation of a new acronym from the dynamic development of social language speech (Budiasa et al., 2021). The use of slang is also often found in everyday conversations, especially between teenagers in the digital era, especially on social media. This research is oriented to provide an overview of adolescents and their relationship with language development and is adjusted to an understanding related to the cultural context that occurs in the individual's daily life, which is also known as indigenous psychology. This study aims to empirically examine adolescents and their lives and specifically seeks to analyze the type, function and original meaning of the use of the slang word *gabut* in adolescents. Data collection was carried out by convenience sampling technique. This type of sample withdrawal includes non-probability sampling. This sampling technique is based on the availability of available participants (Cohen et al., 2013). The selection of this sampling technique is based on considerations regarding the characteristics of the general population, the efficiency of time and energy in conducting research. The number of participants was 308 people. The results of this study can be concluded that the *gabut* condition that is often experienced by adolescents has an impact on negative conditions, both in physical and psychological aspects. These effects include loss of motivation, stress, lack of confidence, drowsiness, feelings of emptiness, and so on.

Keywords: *gabut*, indigenous psychology, teenagers, slang language.

1. Introduction

In essence, every human being will definitely experience a phase of growth and development that starts from before birth to death. Among all the phases of life, there is the adolescent phase which is a transition phase for a child to become an adult individual. Individuals are already considered teenagers when they are in the age range of 11 to 19 or 20 years. The adolescent phase is a period of individual developmental change that includes physical, emotional, social, and cognitive changes (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). The most typical physical changes experienced in adolescence are the occurrence of puberty; leading to sexual maturity. These biological changes are part of the mature process of adolescents that take a long time (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). In Erikson's (1950) developmental theory, adolescent psychosocial is in the stage of identity versus identity confusion, which explains that adolescents who live their lives well can develop the value of loyalty in various aspects (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). In adolescence too, individuals have closer relationships with their peers than parents (Papalia & Martorell, 2021).

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- One of the slang language that is popular among Indonesian teenagers today is *gabut*.
- The use of the word *gabut* has become popular since the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the limitations of individuals in their activities.
- The meaning of *gabut* is in accordance with the definition of *gabut*, which is a condition when they do not do any activity and there is a feeling of confusion to do something
- The potential of *gabut* is related to negative conditions, such as muscle nerve stiffness, unmotivation, lack of confidence, stress, difficulty in achieving in a career, having low self-esteem.
- The *gabut's* condition was supported by the concept of boredom proneness. Most participants who are unable to cope with the situation tend to waste their time doing non-essential activities, such as imagining, daydreaming, and lazing.

1.1 *Task of development of adolescence*

In the cognitive aspect, especially in language development, adolescents' ability to use words becomes better (Santrock, 2018). Vocabulary in adolescence also develops and improves in the use of language as reading material increases. Adolescents will be more aware and often use terms that can have multiple meanings, the use of irony, puns (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). When together with peers, teenagers usually speak using jargon or slang (Santrock, 2018). The slang used by adolescents is one of the development processes of independent identity (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). Adolescence is a developmental transition period for a child to become an adult individual. Of all the existing life periods, adolescence is the most risk period, because of the many tendencies of adolescents to engage in behavior that reflect the immaturity of the adolescent brain. The process of growth and development in the adolescent phase is the most complex and long process, among all existing lifetimes, involving physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. Individuals are considered to enter the adolescent phase when they are 11 to 19 or 20 years old (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). The physical changes that are important and occur in adolescents include the onset of puberty; a process that leads to sexual maturity or the ability to reproduce. Lifestyle patterns usually strengthen in adolescence, which can have an impact on poor health habits to premature death in adulthood. The most major health risks in adolescents arise from behavioral problems, such as eating disorders and drug abuse (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). In the cognitive aspect, adolescents have a very different way of thinking and speaking than younger children. Adolescents have faster and continuously improved information processing abilities. The majority of teens are also able to start thinking abstractly, make good moral judgments, and plan for a realistic future. The abstract thinking that adolescents have allows them to define and discuss various things such as the abstraction of love, justice, and freedom (Papalia & Martorell, 2021).

1.2 *Psychosocial and language development of adolescence*

In language development, adolescents begin to be proficient and experience refinement in the use of language, a richer vocabulary, more awareness related to words as symbols that can have many meanings and metaphors (Papalia & Martorell, 2021; Santrock, 2018). Adolescent language development also includes their skills in taking a social perspective, namely the ability to brake just to adjust the way they speak to other people's perspectives (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). During this period, adolescents usually speak using dialects with their peers, which is characterized by jargon or slang (Santrock, 2018). In the development of this language, the slang used by adolescents is part of the process of developing independent identity when they

begin to be separated from their parents. Although there is a lot of growth and development in the cognitive aspect, adolescents' thinking is not fully mature in some attitudes and behaviors, because the education that adolescents receive only focuses on preparing for the next level of education (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). In Erikson's developmental theory (1950, in Papalia & Martorell, 2021), adolescent psychosocial is in the stage of identity versus identity confusion. Teenagers who succeed in living their lives well can develop the value of loyalty to various things, such as beliefs, belonging, values, ideologies, and so on. On the other hand, individuals who fail to live their teenage life will be formed into adolescents who are unconfident, unfaithful, have feelings of insecurity, and feelings of failure that can have an impact on the achievement of psychological maturity. During this time, adolescents spend more time and rely more on their peers than on their parents. Peers have an important and great influence on adolescence.

Adolescence and its daily life and development are interesting phenomena that need to be studied. Adolescents are unique individuals who sometimes use their own creativity in expressing themselves, including in communicating through language. One of the commonly known languages is slang or slang. Slang is one of the ways of self-expression to show creativity linguistically and is often used in everyday conversations by adolescent to young adult transition groups. According to Budiasa et al. (2021), language is a form of vocal communication used by humans to interact with each other, such as in terms of exchanging opinions, information and presenting self-identity. Then, the existence of language itself also has a strong relationship with the community socially, especially in pronunciation called sociolinguistics. Language development is also classified as dynamic in one's life which means the same as language culture.

1.3 Adolescence and slang language

Based on the Great Dictionary of Indonesian, slang is defined as “a non-formal Indonesian dialect used by certain communities for socializing.” Slang can also be interpreted as everyday language that is usually used by teenagers, using unique terms when speaking (Ridho et al., 2021). The slang language that used to be known as *prokem* language has actually been used since the 1980s. However, usually the *prokem* language is only known and used by certain groups, according to the characteristics of their respective groups (Azizah, 2019). One of the slang that is popular among Indonesian teenagers today is *gabut*. The use of the word *gabut* has become popular since the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the limitations of individuals in their activities (Verianty, 2022). Teenagers today usually define and use the word *gabut* to describe a condition when they do not do any activities and feel confused when they want to do something (Humairoh, 2022). Although *gabut* looks like a positive thing because there is free time for teenagers to take a break from busyness, the condition of *gabut* should not become a habit. The meaning of the use of the word *gabut* for adolescents will be studied more deeply through this research, especially related to the social context, namely to provide opinions related to activities carried out that tend to be boring and have no value for them.

The potential of *gabut* is related to negative conditions, such as muscle nerve stiffness, unmotivation, lack of confidence, stress, difficulty in achieving in a career, having low self-esteem, and so on (Mardiana, 2022; Mardiasuti, 2022; Verianty, 2022). Although there are currently many activities that are recommended to help overcome *gabut* such as playing games, learning to cook, meditate, and others (Teniwut, 2023), these activities have not been scientifically proven to be able to overcome *gabut* effectively. Seeing the many conditions that can be described with the word *gabut* by individuals, especially teenagers, the negative impact of *gabut*, and the lack of further research related to the handling of *gabut*, it is necessary to conduct research to be able to get a clearer picture from adolescents regarding their views on *gabut*, as well as the situations included in the description of the word.

Therefore, research with open-ended questions was conducted to find out adolescents' views on the word *gabut*. This research is important to conduct because the word *gabut* itself is popular among teenagers, as well as the negative impact of *gabut* on the physical and psychological of individuals. This research is oriented to provide an overview of adolescents and their relationship with language development and is adjusted to an understanding related to the cultural context that occurs in the individual's daily life, which is also known as indigenous psychology (Setiono, 2011). This study aims to analyze the type, function and original meaning of the use of the slang word *gabut* in adolescents.

The research aims to provide insights related to the current perception of adolescents towards the condition of the *gabut*, to explore the experience of the *gabut*, as well as the impact of the *gabut* felt on physical and/or mental conditions, both directly and indirectly. It is hoped that this study can provide additional data and information in connection with research on the condition of *gabut*. This research is also expected to provide a reference for other researchers, especially in the field of neuropsychology, to look at the neural working system in individuals who make *gabut* a habit. The findings from this study will be constructed to obtain more detailed and clear information regarding aspects that contribute to the condition of the *gabut*.

As in general, conditions that require good cooperation to achieve goals, presuppose a positive value that develops in it, this is what we want to research. In addition, it is hoped that this research can motivate to further examine interest in studies related to language or psycholinguistic development. This research is important to conduct because the word *gabut* itself is popular among teenagers, as well as the negative impact of *gabut* on the physical and psychological of individuals. The hope of this research is to get a clearer picture of the condition of *gabut* that is often experienced by teenagers, as well as effective ways that can be used to overcome it, in order to produce positive physical and psychological conditions of adolescents. The formulation of the problem in this study is: (a) How do adolescents currently view the condition of *gabut*? (b) What things do adolescents do to overcome *gabut*?

Before explaining *gabut*, it will be explained about the meaning of slang. From the Indonesian Dictionary, it defines that slang as "a non-formal Indonesian dialect used by certain communities for socializing". In a simpler explanation, slang is a colloquial language usually used by teenagers, which characterizes cool terms in speaking, such as "mantul", "santuy", and "gabut" (Ridlo et al., 2021). The use of slang has existed since the 1980s, which is better known as *prokem* language (Azizah, 2019). *Gabut* is one of the slang words that is often used by the younger generation, especially teenagers in their daily lives (Humairoh, 2022). The use of the word *gabut* has become popular since the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the limitations of individuals in their activities.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

This study used was a qualitative that seeks to explain and find variations of research variables in the population studied. The research participants were teenagers in Jakarta who were willing to voluntarily fill out a google form containing open-ended questions. To overcome the bias against the results of this study, the researcher restricts or specifies the research subjects so that the data obtained can meet the homogeneity requirements. Therefore, the research sample in this study must meet these characteristics, namely: (a) adolescents who are not limited by gender, (b) adolescents are in early, middle and late adolescence. Research participants who act as participants are selected by the purposive sampling method, namely sampling is based on respondents who are considered to be in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the

research. Participants in this study were limited to certain characteristics, namely adolescents. The adolescents referred to in this research are 11 to 19 or 20 years old (Papalia & Martorell, 2021).

2.2 Instruments

This research was conducted from November to December 2023 in various schools in Jakarta. Research instruments include: informed consent, a research instrument in the form of a questionnaire with open-ended questions. The research instrument used was in the form of a questionnaire consisting of a form or questionnaire about *gabut*. The questionnaire has sections, namely (a) a preface containing an introduction from the researcher, the purpose of the research, and a request for willingness to fill in; (b) informed consent sheets and control data; (c) instructions for filling out the research form. The data collection is planned to be carried out using the convenience sampling technique. This type of sample withdrawal includes non-probability sampling. This sampling technique is based on the availability of available participants (Cohen et al., 2013). The selection of this sampling technique is based on considerations regarding the characteristics of the general population, the efficiency of time and energy in conducting research.

Research preparation is carried out since preparing a proposal, starting with finding literature that is in accordance with the research topic. After the literature that supports the research is fulfilled, the preparation of measuring instruments and research instruments and research support equipment is carried out. Furthermore, the setting and profile of the research participants and the preparation of the research design were determined. The measuring instrument in this study was designed to measure *gabut* in adolescents in Jakarta. The measurement instrument is in the form of a google form or filling out an online questionnaire containing open-ended questions. Data analysis to answer the hypothesis was carried out by measuring the description and characteristics of *gabut* in adolescents in Jakarta using MAXQDA software. MAXQDA is a software program designed for qualitative data and mixed methods with the help of computers, text and multimedia analysis in academic and scientific institutions.

3. Findings and discussion

This study was attended by 308 participants, with a total of 102 male participants and 206 female participants. All participants in this study included adolescents from the age range of 11 to 20 years. After processing data seen from gender, the results of this study found that there was no significant difference in the experience of *gabut* and the time of appearance of *gabut* between male and female adolescent participants. This section will explain qualitative findings related to *gabut*, which includes the time when participants experience *gabut* and the feelings experienced when in *gabut* conditions. For the first question, the word “stop using gadgets” is detected as a word that appears frequently. Based on ten situations that can cause a feeling of *gabut*, it was found that the situation that tends to make participants experience *gabut* is when they stop using gadgets. The following graph summarizes the frequency of situations that describe the participants’ experiences.

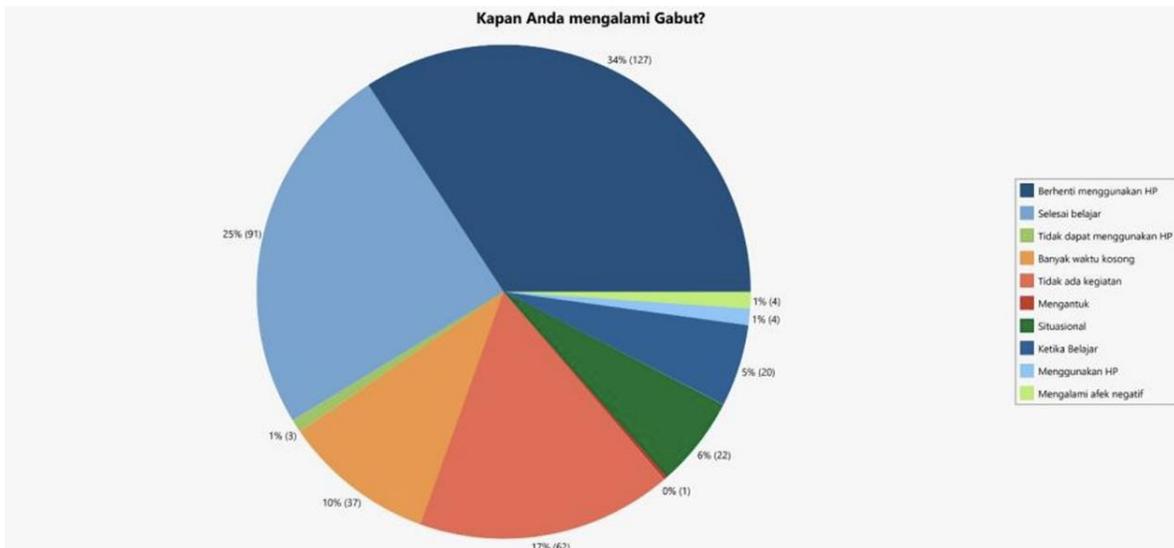


Figure 1. Distribution of situations that make the gap experience emerge

Based on ten situations that could contribute to participants’ *gabut* experience, it was found that the most frequent situation that could trigger a *gabut* feeling was when they stopped using a gadget. The following graph summarizes the frequency of situations that describe the participants’ *gabut* situations.

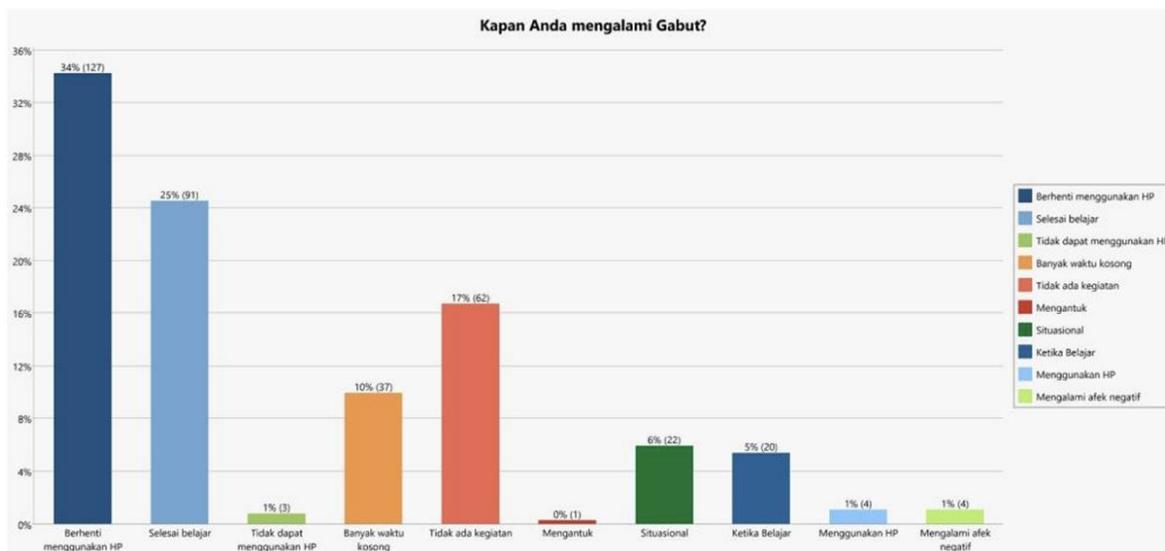


Figure 2. Percentage of participant responses regarding *gabut* experience

For the second question, the word “bored” is detected as a word that appears frequently. From this second question, 2 main themes are formed, namely negative and physical. Based on the two themes formed, boredom is one of the seven feelings detected in the negative theme of affection. Based on 7 feelings that arise when participants experience *gamut* situations, it was found that the most common feeling that participants experience when *gabut* is boredom. The following graph summarizes the frequency of feelings that participants experience when *gabut*.

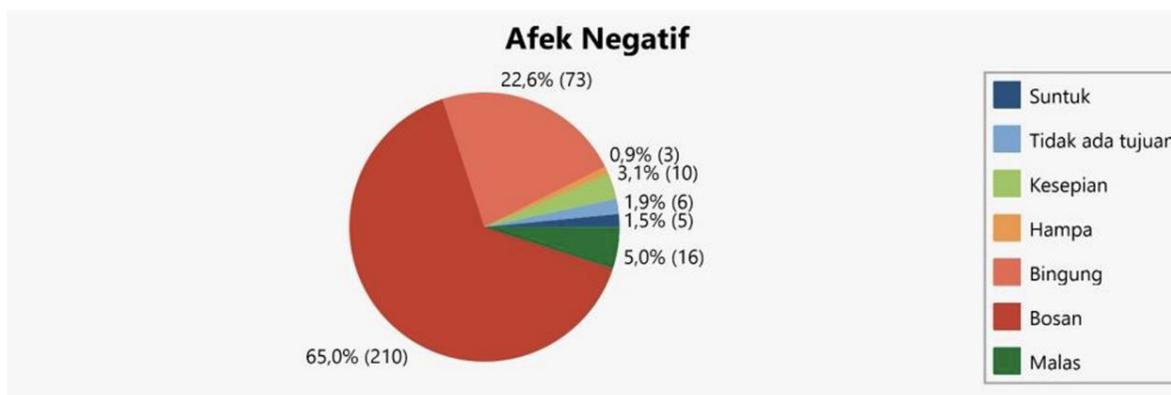


Figure 3. Distribution of participants' feelings when experiencing *gabut*

There is one big theme that arises from each question asked to the participants. As many as 47% of the participants (about 174 people) explained that the *gabut* condition most often appeared when they had free time. As many as 26% of participants (around 243 people) explained that the activities they do when they are busy are doing online activities, which include playing games, watching, contacting friends, and things related to online activities. As many as 47% (about 134 people) usually overcome the condition of *gabut* by doing new activities that they usually do not have time to do, and as many as 52% (about 238 people) express a feeling of boredom when they are busy. After analyzing the *gabut* theory with the understanding that adolescents have, researchers found that adolescents' understanding of the meaning of *gabut* is in accordance with the definition of *gabut*, which is a condition when they do not do any activity and there is a feeling of confusion to do something (Humairoh, 2022).

This is characterized by the majority of adolescents who participated in this study revealing that the condition often appears when they have no entertainment, no fun activities to do, feel confused, and have no friends to talk to. In addition, other teenagers explained that the feeling of excitement often appears when the activity of using a cell phone stops, shortly after finishing playing games, doing monotonous routines, having quite a lot of free time such as long holidays, not having assignments, and so on. In fact, there are a small number of teenagers who complain about the feeling of *gabut* that arises because they play cell phones for too long and procrastinate on work. As many as 34% of participants or equivalent to 127 people revealed that the condition of *gabut* appeared when the activity of using a cell phone stopped. In addition, a total of 25% of participants felt *gabut* after completing the study. 17% and 10% of other participants expressed that the feeling of *gabut* arises when there is no activity and a lot of free time. Furthermore, 6% of participants felt that it was a situational condition, and as many as 5% of participants felt that it was difficult when studying. Based on the results of the analysis carried out, it can be seen that adolescents have an understanding that is in accordance with the true meaning of *gabut*.

The analysis conducted regarding the impact of *gabut* found that there was a correspondence between the experience of the impact of *gabut* felt by adolescent participants and the *gabut* theory. The data of participants in this study produced several major themes. As many as 65% of the participants or equivalent to 210 people expressed experiencing negative feelings when *gabut*, namely feeling bored. In addition, a total of 22.6% of participants felt confused, and 5% of participants felt laziness. The three major impacts that were most experienced by the participants were included in the theme of negative affect. As many as 1.5% of participants complained of experiencing the negative impact of *gabut*, namely *suntuk*, or the the condition that reached its limit and also tired, which is included in the physical aspect. A number of adolescents revealed that the *gabut* condition experienced had an impact on mood swings which included the emergence of negative emotions and thoughts, causing feelings of restlessness, the appearance of

unimportant thoughts, feelings of emptiness, moodiness, loneliness, stress, and many more. Some of the remaining teenagers revealed that the condition of *gabut* caused a feeling of confusion to start activities and made their condition demotivated, unexcited, and aimless. The discovery related to the impact of *gabut* is in accordance with the existing theory, namely the potential of *gabut* related to various negative conditions, both in physical and psychological aspects; muscle nerve stiffness, unmotivated, unconfident, stressed, having low self-esteem, and so on (Mardiana, 2022; Mardiasuti, 2022; Verianty, 2022).

The major themes formed from the condition of the *gabut* are associated with the concept of boredom proneness. Boredom proneness is defined as a situation of relatively low arousal and dissatisfaction, due to a situation that is not adequately stimulated (Vodanovich, 2016). The condition of boredom proneness is characterized by a feeling of boredom that is frequent and related to negative impacts; low self-control and self-esteem (Mugon et al., 2020). The results of the study related to the various efforts made by the participants in overcoming the *gabut* supported the concept of boredom proneness. Most participants who are unable to cope with the situation tend to waste their time doing non-essential activities, such as imagining, daydreaming, and lazing. This shows that the concept of boredom proneness experienced is proven to be related to behavior dysfunction, which of course leads to negative impacts. Gaps that are not resolved properly will lead to the concept of boredom proneness, which leads to low control and self-esteem. Other participants who were able to overcome the condition of *gabut* revealed various efforts that had been made during *gabut* such as daydreaming, arranging a schedule to travel, minimizing the feeling of *gabut*, trying to overcome mood, doing fun activities, doing hobbies, culinary, enjoying the atmosphere, healing, and designing activities that kept them busy. After conducting an analysis in the aspect of how to overcome the *gabut*, the researcher found that the ability of adolescents to overcome *gabut* is not fully effective and able to minimize the condition of *gabut*. This is evidenced by the efforts made by the participants in overcoming the gap that is not completely in accordance with the existing theory. Based on existing research data, participants usually design and carry out activities that are not certain to be carried out, only in the form of vague plans. In addition, participants tend to overcome existing *gabut* conditions by doing excessive activities, such as doing heavy work and doing busy activities that can have an impact on productivity. This shows that the majority of adolescent participants have not been able to overcome the *gabut* condition experienced properly and effectively. This condition of the *gabut* that is not properly addressed can have a negative impact in the future.

4. Conclusion

The results of this study can be concluded that the *gabut* condition that is often experienced by adolescents has an impact on negative conditions, both in physical and psychological aspects. The impact of these impacts includes loss of motivation, stress, lack of confidence, drowsiness, feelings of emptiness, and so on. The study also found that as many as 127 out of a total of 307 participants expressed a feeling of *gabut* appearing when they stopped using gadgets.

Advice for teenagers to reduce feelings of loneliness, especially those caused by stopping using gadgets, is to do activities or activities that do not use electronic devices, such as exercising, reading novels, visiting new places, and many more. For researchers, the next can focus on the field of neuropsychology by looking at the changes that occur in individuals who often experience *gabut* with individuals who do not, in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture related to the condition of human nerves when feeling *gabut*. In addition, researchers can also add a wider sample to compare the condition of adolescents with individuals in other stages of development such as early adulthood.

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