



**UMN**  
UNIVERSITAS  
MULTIMEDIA  
NUSANTARA



Vol. 13 No. 1



JURNAL ILMU KOMUNIKASI  
**ULTIMACOMM**

**Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi**  
**ULTIMACOMM**

**E-ISSN 2656-0208 | ISSN 2085-4609**

**Vol. 13 No. 1, June 2021**

Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi diterbitkan dua kali setahun sebagai media informasi karya ilmiah untuk bidang kajian jurnalisme digital dan studi komunikasi strategis.

**Pelindung:**

Dr. Ninok Leksono

**Penanggung jawab**

Andrey Andoko, M.Sc

**Editor in chief**

Dr. Daniel Susilo

**Deputy Editor in Chief**

Camelia Pasandaran, M.Si

**Managing editors**

Adi Wibowo Octavianto, M.Si (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, Serpong)  
Bonifacius Hendar Putranto, M.A (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, Serpong)  
Cendera Rizky, M.Si (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, Serpong)  
Ellen M. Yasak, M.A. (Universitas Tribhuwana Tunggaladewi, Malang)  
Dr. Fany Lesmana (Universitas Kristen Petra, Surabaya)  
F.X. Lilik Dwi Mardijatmo, M.A. (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, Serpong)  
Ignatius Haryanto, M.A (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, Serpong)  
Teguh Dwi Putranto, M.Med.Kom (Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya)

**Desain dan Tata Letak:**

Ellen M. Yasak, M.A

**Mitra Bestari:**

Ambang Priyonggo, MA (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara)  
Desideria Cempaka Wijaya Murti, Ph.D (Universitas Atmajaya, Yogyakarta)  
Dr. Endah Murwani (Universitas Multimedia Nusantara)  
Dr. Eriyanto (Universitas Indonesia)  
Dr. Irwa Zarkasi (Universitas Al Azhar, Jakarta)  
Dr. Malinee Khumsupa (Chiang Mai University, Thailand)  
Dr. Moch. Kresna, M.Si (Universitas Bakrie, Jakarta)  
Myra V. de Leon, Ed.D (De La Salle University, Philippines)  
Nunik Maharani H., M.Comn&MediaSt (Mon) (Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung)  
Dr. Rahma Sugihartati (Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya)  
Dr. Rini Darmastuti (Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga)  
Dr. Rustono Farady Marta (Universitas Bunda Mulia, Jakarta)  
Dr. Wira Yudha Alam (Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya)  
Yearry Panji Setianto, Ph.D (Universitas Sultan Agung Tirtayasa, Banten)

Versi online dari jurnal UltimaComm bisa diakses di

<http://ejournals.umn.ac.id/index.php/FIKOM>

## DAFTAR ISI

Artificial Consumption Needs through Social Media Account <b>Chininta Rizka Angelia</b>	1
Buddhism Inside The Newsroom: An Ethnographic Study of DAAI TV <b>Wirawan</b>	23
Crisis in Indonesian Live Music Industry During Pandemic <b>Aphrodita Julia Saraswati</b>	41
The Dynamics of Communal Participatory Communication in the Anticipation of COVID-19 Pandemic on WhatsApp Group Media <b>Dwi Kartikawati</b>	65
Covid-19 and Cinemas: The Importance of Creating the Engagement with Customers through Social Media <b>Ramadhan Maulana Putra, Intan Primadini</b>	82
Partisan Selective Exposure in COVID-19 News <b>Anindita Widiastuti, Kunto Adi Wibowo, Benazir Bona Pratamawaty</b>	93
Gender and Digital Public Relations: Who Gets Benefits? <b>Nobertus Ribut Santoso</b>	108
The Use of the Auto Base Accounts on Twitter as A Media for Sharing Opinions <b>Risma Hasna Dwiwina, Kinkin Yuliaty Subarsa Putri</b>	123
The Use of Viral Marketing Through Instagram to Increase Brand Awareness <b>Deni Yanuar, Zakirah Azman, Febri Nurrahmi, Fithria Kamara</b>	145
Identification of Relationship Maintenance in Chinese Muslim Marriages in Film "Bidadari Mencari Sayap" <b>Silvia Pristianita, Rustono Farady Marta</b>	169

---

## Artificial Consumption Needs through Social Media Account: Semiotic Study in The Endorser's Photos on Instagram

**Chininta Rizka Angelia**

Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara

Email: chininta@umn.ac.id

*Received Apr. 2, 2020; Revised Sept. 15, 2020, March 26, 2020; Accepted Jun. 4, 2021*

### Abstract

The young generation has a very important role in promoting tourism. The efforts of this young generation cannot be separated considering that sustainable tourism is developing very rapidly in various tourism activities. They can do environmental conservation and participate in improving the welfare of local communities. Social media and the younger generation are the two things that have the greatest potential to help in the publication and information on tourism. This research was conducted at Ciletuh Geopark, Sukabumi Regency, West Java Province. The research method used is descriptive qualitative by collecting primary data including interviews, focus group discussions and field observations. The results show that the role of the younger generation in using social media for sustainable tourism development is important. They are aware of the benefits that social media will provide if used wisely. However, there are still obstacles faced, namely not yet the maximum use of social media so that it has not been able to produce maximum promotion due to limited innovation. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of the young generation in using social media to support sustainable tourism in the Ciletuh Geopark, Sukabumi, West Java Province, as an effort to develop sustainable tourism.

Keyword: communication, social media, young people, sustainable tourism, geopark ciletuh

### INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalisation, business actors compete with each other for the market. In 2005, more than 156,000 new products were introduced in stores worldwide (Trout & Ravis, 2010). This means, every three minutes, one product is launched. Several manufacturers can produce one type of product. So, it can be said that the increasing number of producers is contesting the market share of a type of product. Competitive competition between similar producers is caused by abundant production. The number of productions is greater than the number of consumer needs. In response to this, producers are required to develop marketing strategies and tactics that ensure the continuity of the flow of production to consumers. Marketing strategies and tactics in the production era also experienced a shift, from the ability to produce to the ability to create artificial needs for consumption (Sujono, 2013, p. 13). This phenomenon is what Baudrillard refers to in the book "*The Consumer Society Myths and Structures*" (1998) as a



The development of information technology also influences changes in the structure of society. According to Tunggal (2019), people's lifestyles have changed in the use of technology. Almost everyone already has a smartphone, tablet, or other devices that are connected to the internet. To find information and entertainment, people no longer always use conventional media. The public has a choice of new media, one of which is social media. Apjii.or.id (2015) released a survey conducted by the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers (or APJII) with PUSKAKOM, the University of Indonesia, regarding internet users' activities. From the survey, it is known that there are 87.4% of internet users who own and use applications or social media content, 68.7% of users do searching, 59.9% of users use instant messaging, 59.7% of users search for the latest news, 27.3% downloaded videos, and 27.3% uploaded videos. Through these data, it can be concluded that most Indonesians access the internet to use social media. It is undeniable that the presence of social media in internet networks attracts public interest. Wearesocial.sg (2015) released statistical data on the use of social media in Indonesia in January 2015 (see Figure 1). There are 72 million active social media accounts, or 28% of the total population of Indonesia. A total of 62 million social media accounts are accessed via mobile devices, or 24% of the total population of Indonesia. So, it can be concluded that most Indonesians have social media accounts and access them via mobile devices.

**JAN 2015**

**SOCIAL MEDIA USE**  
BASED ON MONTHLY ACTIVE USER NUMBERS REPORTED BY THE COUNTRY'S MOST ACTIVE PLATFORM

Metric	Value
TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS	72.0M
ACTIVE SOCIAL ACCOUNTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION	28%
TOTAL NUMBER OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTS ACCESSING VIA MOBILE	62.0M
ACTIVE MOBILE SOCIAL ACCOUNTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION	24%

we are social

Source: [wearesocial.sg](http://wearesocial.sg), 2015

Based on the data in Figure 1, it appears that community activities are closely related to social media. Social media is spreadable, technically providing opportunities for users to share a variety of content independently (Kusumasari & Arifianto, 2019). Thus, users can not only consume but also produce content. This situation raises the idea that marketing activities can also be carried out on social media. Technology and social media trends have become a weapon for producers against a more global society and modern behaviour (Marta & William, 2016). Producers use people's habits in using social media to transform consumption into rational actions for the absorption of the abundance of

production. The producer transmits this interest through the play of signs presented by the media, including the social media Instagram. Producers surround people from their various daily activities using the media because they become targets that should be considered in endorsement activities.

This study sought to investigate the sign system that is packaged in the practice of endorsement on Instagram social media to drive consumption. This research is based on the idea that manufacturers are trying to change their marketing activities, from just marketing products to creating artificial needs for products in the midst of fierce competition.

According to Baudrillard (1998), consumption is an effort made by everyone to fulfil their needs, desires and expectations. However, excessive consumption activities can develop into consumerism, namely buying and using goods and services in quantities that exceed needs (Hornby, 2000, p. 264-265; Sujono, 2013, p. 9). The development of consumption activity into consumerism can be seen through the process of production, distribution, and consumption itself.

Baudrillard states that consumption is not sourced from use-value, but needs are the production system's product. Furthermore, Baudrillard (1998, p. 75) formulates a genealogy of consumption: first, the order of production produces machine power or productive power, a technical system radically different from traditional equipment; secondly, the production order produces reasonable capital or productive forces, a rational system of investment and circulation that is fundamentally different from the previous 'wealth' and trading models; third, the order of production produces the capability of the wage system to workers, an abstract, systematised productive force, which is fundamentally different from traditional 'work'; and fourth, the order of production generates needs. The system of needs, demand or productive forces as something rational, coherent, controlled as a whole complements each other with the three orders of the process of controlling the productive forces and the production process. Need as a system is also radically different from joy and satisfaction. Needs are used as elements in the system.

The economic system is considered a determinant in people's lives through the genealogy of consumption above. At first, productive forces and production relations were considered the main thing, so that production was carried out continuously to meet the needs of the community. However, in the end, the quantity of goods produced is greater than the demand for those goods. As a result, the flow of production is hampered, and production is overflowing. For this reason, producers create a system of needs so that people take consumption actions in order to save the continuity of the production flow.

In the context of consumer society, marketing strategies and tactics also experience a shift from the ability to produce to the ability to create artificial needs for consumption. The competitive competition encourages producers to make strategies and tactics for creating needs increasingly vague and inevitable for consumers. In their tactics,

manufacturers seek to optimise the use of information technology in marketing strategies. In this case, producers are given the convenience to market and distribute their products virtually, including social media.

In a journal entitled "*Social Media: The New Hybrid Element of The Promotion Mix*" (2009), Mangold & Faulds stated that the emergence of social media has significantly changed communication tools and strategies between producers and consumers. On social media, consumers can connect with each other and share information quickly. They can share their opinions and experiences on a product through their social media accounts.

Producers see that social media can be used to empower audiences to build awareness or even change behaviour (Thackeray et al., 2008; Korda & Itani, 2015). Marketing through social media has also proven effective to reach target consumers (Marta & William, 2016). In this case, producers can take advantage of a trusted and influential figure in social media to market their products. The figure is an endorser.

An endorser is a figure used by marketers to convey messages related to a product or service. It is hoped that consumers will trust the message from the endorser and try the product being marketed. Endorser figures are considered influential because they have knowledge, experience, and expertise in a field that makes them popular and famous. Simply put, the figure does not have to come from among artists or public figures but must have reasonably high popularity, as evidenced by the number of followers (Elwani & Kurniawan, 2020). Popularity makes them considered a celebrity. In Instagram social media, they are known as Instagram celebrities or selebgram.

Through the journal "*Celebrity Endorsement: Advertising Agency Managers' Perspective*," Erdoan & Baker (2005) revealed six reasons for using Celebrity Endorser. The first is 'Standing Out.' Audiences get exposure to advertisements from various types of products and information media every day. The high frequency of these advertisements makes the audience bored and did not consider the advertisement to be special anymore. Seeing this condition, marketers use celebrity figures in their product advertisements to attract public attention. The second reason is 'Celebrity Value.' The use of celebrities in an advertisement can build, update, and add a new dimension to the product. The values adopted by celebrities will be tied to the products advertised. For example, the shampoo product 'Clear' uses the figure of Agnes Monica in its advertisement. Agnes Monica, who is always known to look neat and energetic, gives her own added value to 'Clear.' The message to be conveyed is that for the most effective results and in the shortest time, 'Clear' shampoo is the solution. The third reason is 'Instant Credibility or Aspiration.' Using celebrities in an advertisement can help businesses save time to build credibility.

A new product that is not widely known can take advantage of a celebrity figure who has credibility and can represent the product. For example, the beautiful actress Laura Basuki, who has credibility in the entertainment world and has white and smooth skin, has become an endorser of the facial care product 'Hada Labo.' Although 'Hada Labo' is a new

product in Indonesia, Laura Basuki's figure is able to represent the positive and satisfying results of the 'Hada Labo' product. The fourth reason is 'PR coverage.' Celebrities are topical figures. Whatever she does is always in the spotlight of the camera and wide publication. This is the moment marketers are looking for. When celebrities use their products indirectly, the products are also widely marketed. The fifth reason is 'Desperate for ideas.' When ideas related to advertising concepts are unacceptable or inappropriate, then the use of celebrities in advertising can be the solution. The attractiveness and popularity of celebrities add their own points to the advertising concept. The last reason is 'Convincing Clients.' It is not difficult to convince clients to use celebrity figures in their product advertisements, especially if the celebrity has a good image and reputation. This can streamline the ad campaign process. If successful, the marketing manager becomes famous and can retain the position.

Previous research related to endorsers in various product or service brands explains mixed results. For example, Saparso & Lestari (2009) revealed that Tamara Blezinsky, Luna Maya, and Dian Sastro had an influence on the image of the soap brand 'Lux,' especially on product match, popularity, credibility, target audience, physical attractiveness, and interest of endorser factors. On the other hand, several factors, such as celebrity controversy risk, multiple endorsements, and celebrity brand users, did not affect the image of the soap brand 'Lux.' In addition, Rini & Astuti (2012) explain that there is a positive and significant influence of the variables of visibility, credibility, attractiveness and strength on the image formation of the motorcycle brand 'Honda Vario' starring Agnes Monica. Similar results were also obtained by Rodiyaan & Madiawati (2016), that Agnes Monica had a simultaneous influence on the brand image of the products she marketed. Meanwhile, Ismayanti & Santika (2017) succeeded in revealing the desire to buy a product as a result of using Al Ghazali as a celebrity endorser of 'Nike' sports shoes. Meanwhile, Marselina & Siregar (2017) argue that, partially, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity affect brand image, but expertise and respect factors have no effect.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that the use of celebrities as endorsers dramatically influences the formation of marketed product values which will also directly affect the credibility of marketers. However, the use of celebrities in product marketing does not always have a positive impact. Chakraborty & Agrawal (2005) revealed that the use of celebrities as endorsers also has risks, including negative publicity, overshadowing, overexposure, over usage, extinction, and financial risk.

Negative publicity is when a celebrity has problems and loses their popularity; the celebrity's value will decrease and have an impact on the image of the product they sell. Overshadowing is when the celebrity used in product marketing has a dominant image, there is a possibility that the celebrity's image defeats the identity of the product being marketed. This has an impact on consumers who can remember celebrity figures but find it difficult to remember what products they market. Overexposure means popularity and is a boomerang. It could be a celebrity accept all the advertising offers. As a result, there is no one specific product that can be associated with the celebrity. Of course, this cannot

persuade consumers to any product that is being marketed. Over usage means a product that is endorsed by several celebrities, either in one ad session or several ad sequels. This practice actually confuses consumers, which figure is the endorser of the product. Extinction happens when celebrities endorse a product for an extended period. Celebrity endorsement of a product is, of course, based on an agreed cooperation contract. If the contract is long, it will have an impact on the identity of the product association. For that, celebrities must maintain their behaviour during the contract. Financial risk means the cost of using celebrities as endorsers. This must be taken into account by marketers and used as efficiently as possible so as not to create a crisis.

Costanzo & Goodnight (2005) revealed the relationship between celebrity endorsements and brand recall. So far, marketers have assumed that the use of celebrities in advertising will increase brand recall in consumers. This is because marketers believe the use of celebrity endorsers will strengthen consumer memory, or there is a relationship between the celebrity endorser and the product being endorsed. However, it turns out that the use of celebrities in advertisements in magazines does not remind consumers of brands endorsed by celebrities both in the world of sports and in the world of entertainment. Pradhan et al. (2014) also revealed that user-brand personality and brand-celebrity personality significantly influence consumers to make purchases, while celebrity-user personality has no impact.

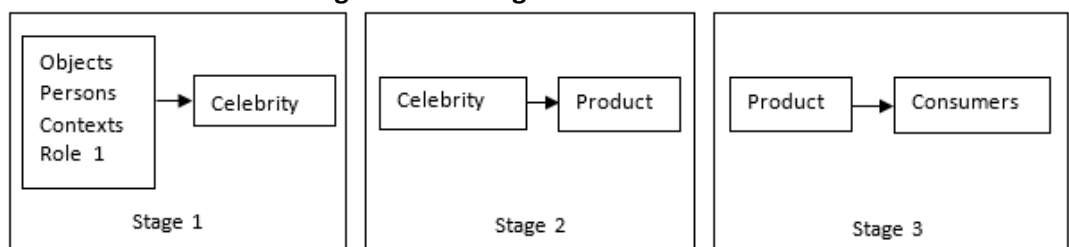
In marketing a product, the endorser acts as an opinion leader. Opinion leaders play a role in providing information and persuasion to others (Natalia & Rumambi, 2013). In this case, the endorser receives information from producers or marketers and conveys it to consumers in such a way that it can influence and shape consumer opinions. The term opinion leader was first proposed by Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1940) when conducting research related to the influence of mass media (radio) on the decision to elect the president. Lazarsfeld found that a person does not immediately accept and believe the information conveyed by the mass media. Instead, the information conveyed through mass media is received by opinion leaders and then forwarded to the public. In this case, the public will accept and trust information if conveyed by people they trust. These people are known as opinion leaders (Hananto, 2014). The process of delivering information from opinion leaders to the public can be explained through the "Two-Step Flow" theory formulated by Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1955). This theory consists of two stages. The first stage is the source (mass media) conveying information to the opinion leader, and the second stage is the information received by the opinion leader is forwarded to the audience (opinion receiver) by spreading influence.

In general, an endorsement is a marketing activity using an endorser who expresses their opinion on a product, service, or idea to influence consumers. In other words, producers' motives to influence consumers in consuming can be pursued through endorsement practices. Through a journal entitled "*Who is the celebrity endorser? Cultural foundations of the endorsement process*," McCracken (1989) reveals the types of endorsements in the real world, namely explicit, implicit, imperative, and co-presentational modes. In the explicit type, the endorser communicates that they are endorsing a product. In the

implicit type, the endorser does not say directly that they endorse a product but says they always use it. In the imperative type, the endorser will be persuasive; they will invite others to use the product on various occasions. Finally, in the co-presentational mode, the endorser will not communicate verbally but uses the products marketed in their daily activities.

McCracken (1989) formulated a meaning transfer model to show the effectiveness of a celebrity endorser, which depends on its quality to bring meaning in the process of acceptance by the target audience, which consists of three stages (see Figure 3). In the first stage, marketers identify the cultural meanings embodied in a product, such as age, lifestyle, status, and others. Marketers also determine what they want to convey from the product. Then, marketers survey objects, individuals, and contexts (relationships) that have the desired meaning. The survey aims so that consumers can see that what is in the object, individual and context is contained in the product being marketed. In the second stage, the celebrity figure chosen as an endorser by the marketer must be able to transfer that meaning to the product being marketed. All the desired meanings of celebrities must be expressed, and unwanted meanings must be avoided. Finally, advertisements must be made by highlighting the similarity of meaning between celebrities and products so that consumers can see the meaning contained in celebrities according to the products they market. In the third stage, the meaning that has been transferred to the product must also be transferred to the consumer. However, the transfer process cannot occur automatically within the consumer. Consumers must accept, pay attention to and use the product to derive its meaning. Consumers can choose and combine these meanings in the experimental process when using the product. Celebrities have extensive and engaging publications, so consumers see how celebrities change over time. These changes inspire consumers. Consumers see celebrities as the figures they want, and the transformation process that is carried out convinces consumers to be able to do the same. This shows that celebrities have transferred some meaning to consumers.

**Figure 2 Meaning Transfer Model**



**Source: McCracken, 1989, p. 315**

In Instagram social media, producers can reach and interact with their consumers. Manufacturers can also offer and explain their products through photos. The use of Instagram as a marketing medium can be seen from the emergence of online shop accounts, users who market products in uploaded photos, and posts with the 'sponsored' logo on the Instagram timeline. Thus, it can be said that Instagram has formed visual content (photo) that dominates the way people communicate through social media.

The photo consists of a number of signs inserted by the manufacturer to pin artificial needs to consumers. This marking practice is carried out in such a way as to fulfil the interests of producers regarding production. The play that the producers play through photos is so smooth and almost hard to capture. This is considering the activities of consumers in accessing Instagram and uploading photos about themselves as something that is usually done in their daily lives. When consumers see a photo, they absorb a number of hidden signs and meanings in the photo. These signs are consumed by consumers, who are unwittingly led to continuing to feel the need for the product and make consumers stick to uncontrolled consumption.

By understanding consumption as a sign, the effort to uncover the meaning behind a sign requires the study of signs, namely semiotics. Semiotics has a special place in Baudrillard's thinking. Baudrillard believed that analysing the value of signs would provide information that Marxists had overlooked. By analysing the sign, it will be seen how the dominant party (capitalist) creates sign value.

The question formulated in the research is how producers use the sign system on Instagram social media to generate consumption in consumers.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a critical paradigm to uncover the use of signs in marketing on Instagram social media. The author will uncover the meaning behind the use of signs in the uploaded photos and uncover the interests of marketers behind the signs. The author uses Roland Barthes' semiotic research method, which has a two-stage significance model to analyse the meaning of the sign system (see Figure 4). In the first stage of significance, there is Saussure's thought regarding the relationship between the signifier (signifier) and the signified (signified) in a sign to external reality, which is called denotation (Fiske, 2002, p. 85). At this stage, the meaning of the sign is direct, clear and explicit. Meanwhile, in the second stage of significance, there is an interaction of signs with the reader's feelings or emotions and cultural values, which is called connotation (Fiske, 2002, p. 86). At this stage, the meaning of the sign is indirect and implicit. It can be said that connotation is subjective, arbitrary and depends on cultural knowledge.



**Figure 3. Roland Barthes's Sign Map**

<sup>1</sup> Signifier	<sup>2</sup> Signified
<sup>3</sup> Denotative Sign	
<sup>4</sup> Connotative Signifier	<sup>5</sup> Connotative Signified
<sup>6</sup> Connotative Sign	

Source: Paul Cobley & Litza Jansz, 1999, p. 51; Sobur, 2003, p. 69


The data in this study are photos of daily activities uploaded by Instagram accounts that are consistent in carrying out endorsement activities on their official Instagram account pages, such as @glennalinskie, @alodita, @amazing, and @ernandaputra. Researchers did not choose accounts that were deliberately explicitly created for endorsement activities, such as @endorsesarena and @endorseardinarasti. These photos both market a product in a subtle way (soft selling), both from the subject of the photo and the photo caption. The account owner who acts as an endorser packs product with gestures, place settings in their daily activities, where even taking photos seems 'rough.' The photos were analysed from a syntagmatic and paradigmatic perspective to find the relationship between signs.

## RESULTS

Syntagmatic analysis in this study includes analysis of visual aspects (such as facial expressions, body poses, clothes, colours, place settings, etc.), technical aspects (such as the size of the figure, camera point of view), and the syntax/title of the photo, which is then linked to each other, thus forming a series of stories (see Table 1-5).




Table 1 Syntagmatic Analysis of Account Photos @glennalinskie Photo

Signification	Visual Aspect	Technical Aspect	Syntax/Photo Title
<b>The first stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The size shot is CU/Close-Up.</li> <li>- Camera point of view using objective point of view.</li> </ul>	<i>Caption.</i>
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A figure of a couple's cellphone case in wedding attire.</li> <li>- Body pose facing each other and kissing.</li> <li>- Couple showing happy expressions.</li> <li>- A cup of latte/coffee/tea is a type of drink that is commonly consumed every day.</li> <li>- The colour of the green drink impresses harmony, peace, love.</li> <li>- The grey background colour conveys neutrality.</li> <li>- Tag the online shop account @esprecielo, which sells green tea latte and @thekase_indo, which sells cellphone cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shows intimacy.</li> <li>- Shows the distance between the object of the photo with the audience.</li> </ul>	"An #ALLURE a day keeps the bad mood away".
<b>Denotative Sign</b>	A cup of green tea latte and a cellphone case.		
<b>The Second Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>	A cup of green tea latte and a cellphone case.		
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A cup of green tea latte can be consumed every day.</li> <li>- Wedding photos are a happy moment.</li> </ul>		
<b>Connotative Sign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Green tea latte 'Allure' can be consumed every day and makes you happy.</li> <li>- Photos of sacred wedding moments can be applied to everyday items.</li> <li>- Green tea latte 'Allure' is a premium class drink.</li> </ul>		


Source: Data Analysis

**Table 2. Syntagmatic Analysis of @alodita Account**

Signification	Visual Aspect	Technical Aspect	Syntax/Photo Title
<b>The First Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Size shot using MS/Medium Shot.</li> <li>- Camera point of view using objective point of view.</li> </ul>	<i>Caption</i>
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adult female.</li> <li>- Sit on a chair with her left leg crossed and resting on her right leg.</li> <li>- The colour of the black shirt impresses firmness, glamour, efficiency.</li> <li>- The colour of the grey and white striped pants conveys neutrality and simplicity.</li> <li>- Brown watch colour impresses grounded, warmth, seriousness.</li> <li>- Canvas shoes give a relaxed/casual look.</li> <li>- The shoe motif is an edition of designer Keith Haring, which uses neutral colours, namely black and white.</li> <li>- The background of the table, chairs and wooden patterned floor indicates a cafe.</li> <li>- Online shop name tag @wakaishoes @wakaiindonesia.</li> <li>- A woman wearing Wakai shoes is sitting casually in a cafe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shows a personal relationship.</li> <li>- Indicates the absence of involvement between the audience and the object of the photo.</li> </ul>	"Perfect companion for my daily activities ❤️ #wakaixkeitharing".
<b>Denotative Sign</b>	A woman wearing Wakai shoes is sitting casually in a cafe.		
<b>The Second Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>	A woman wearing Wakai shoes is sitting casually in a cafe.		
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wakai shoes are canvas shoes.</li> <li>- Canvas shoes give a casual look.</li> </ul>		
<b>Connotative Sign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Canvas shoes can be used by women who want to look relaxed but still fashionable.</li> <li>- Wakai shoe users are popular</li> <li>- Wooden chairs without pillows still make users comfortable to sit for long.</li> </ul>		


Source: Data Analysis

**Table 3 Syntagmatic Analysis of @amazing Account**

Signification	Visual Aspect	Technical Aspect	Syntax/Photo Title
<b>The First Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Shot size using FS/Full Shot.</li> <li>-Camera point of view using objective point of view.</li> </ul>	<i>Caption</i>
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dark/black tree colour suggests assertiveness, glamour, emotional security.</li> <li>- Orange sky colour (a combination of red and yellow) suggests warmth, cosiness, physical comfort.</li> <li>- The shadow of the trees on the surface of the sea gives the impression of many trees.</li> <li>- Setting a place on the beach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indicates the existence of social relationships.</li> <li>- Indicates the absence of involvement between the audience and the object of the photo.</li> </ul>	<p>@sjoraindonesia #escapetheboredom. The dancing trees. When you visit #Walakiri, there is no doubt you would be staring at these magnificent trees without feeling bored. Especially during the sunset. It is good to be missed".</p>
<b>Denotative Sign</b>	Trees on the beach at sunset.		
<b>The Second Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>	Trees on the beach at sunset.		
<b>Signifier</b>	The beach is one of the vacation destinations.		
<b>Connotative Sign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drinks from @sjoraindonesia make anyone who drinks it not feel bored and as if on vacation to a beautiful place.</li> <li>- Walakiri Beach at sunset seems hot but still beautiful.</li> </ul>		


Source: Data Analysis

**Table 4 Syntagmatic Analysis of @alodita Account**

Signification	Visual Aspect	Technical Aspect	Syntax/Photo Title
<b>The First Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The size shot is CU/Close-Up.</li> <li>- Camera point of view using objective point of view.</li> </ul>	<i>Caption</i>
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Woman's hand takes a bottle from the box.</li> <li>- The box is erected sideways on the woman's thigh.</li> <li>- The box contains eight bottles of juice drinks. Judging from the size of the bottle, this is a kind of sampler pack.</li> <li>- The bottle contains a variety of fruit juice, so it has a variety of colours.</li> <li>- The background of the white bed linen and the patterned wooden floor signifies the bedroom.</li> <li>- Tag the name of the online shop @nakedpressjuicery that sells juice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shows the details of the drink, but with a wider shot. This technique shows what the endorser wants followers to see.</li> <li>- Indicates the absence of involvement between the audience and the object of the photo.</li> </ul>	"Good nutrition is the key to good mental and physical health. Stay healthy, everyone!"
<b>Denotative Sign</b>	A woman takes a bottle of juice from the box.		
<b>The Second Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>	A woman takes a bottle of juice from the box.		
<b>Signifier</b>	Juice is a nutritious drink.		
<b>Connotative Sign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Juice nutrition for the body can be drunk before the activity in the morning.</li> <li>- @Nakedpressjuicery is a must drink for healthy lifestyle observers.</li> <li>- @Nakedpressjuicery be a solution for people who have high mobility.</li> <li>- @Nakedpressjuicery is an affordable drink for everyone.</li> </ul>		

Source: Data Analysis

Table 5 Syntagmatic Analysis of Account @ernandaputra

Signification	Visual Aspect	Technical Aspect	Syntax/Photo Title
<b>The First Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The size shot is CU/Close-Up.</li> <li>- Camera point of view using objective point of view.</li> </ul>	Caption
<b>Signifier</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A man.</li> <li>- Holding a phone.</li> <li>- Portrait of the sea view and the boulders in front of it.</li> <li>- Tag the name of the online shop @samsungmobile, which sells cellphones and @kakatuaahotel, which provides hostels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men's hands, cellphones and cellphone screen displays look focused, while the surrounding scenery looks blurry, indicating that there are details that the endorser wants followers to see.</li> <li>- Shows the involvement between the audience and the object of the photo.</li> </ul>	<p>"As clear as it gets. A quick snap from the majestic view at Piaynemo, Raja Ampat. #tunjukkanmomenmu".</p>
<b>Denotative Sign</b>	A man takes pictures of the landscape using a Samsung phone.		
<b>The Second Stage</b>			
<b>Signified</b>	A man takes pictures of the landscape using a Samsung phone.		
<b>Signifier</b>	The camera feature on the cellphone produces clear photos.		
<b>Connotative Sign</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobile is a tool that must be taken while on vacation.</li> <li>- Samsung phones are suitable for users who travel a lot.</li> <li>- Samsung phones make anyone can be a great photographer.</li> </ul>		

Source: Data Analysis

The paradigmatic analysis in this study compares some aspects from the five photos, which are considered to have the same characteristics as a condition for forming a paradigmatic relationship. Through social media Instagram, producers find correlations between products and signs on photos that have essential meaning for consumers for their economic purposes.

Endorsement activities carried out by producers tend to be implicit. For example, manufacturers manipulate consumption signs through the features provided by Instagram, such as tags and hashtags. Indirectly, the endorser informs the product being marketed and the online shop (producer) that sells the product to their followers (see Table 6).

**Table 6 Manipulation of the use of Tag and Hashtag on Photos**

Photo	Tag in Photo	Tag in Caption	Hashtag In Caption	Note
Photo 1	√		√	The online shop @esprecielo sells green tea latte Allure, and @thekase_indo sells cellphone cases. #Allure shows photos of other accounts using the same product.
Photo 2	√		√	The online shop @wakaiondonesia sells Wakai canvas shoes. #wakaixkeitharing shows photos of other accounts using the same product.
Photo 3		√	√	The online shop @sjoraindonesia sells mango peach smooth fusion drinks. #escapetheboredinary shows photos of other accounts using the same product.
Photo 4	√			The online shop @nakedpressjuicery sells bottled juice drinks.
Photo 5	√		√	The online shop @samsungmobile sells Samsung phones. #showyourmoment shows photos of other accounts using the same product.

Source: Data Analysis

Manufacturers do not talk about their products directly to their target consumers on Instagram. Instead, manufacturers manipulate endorser experiences when using products in photo captions (see Table 7).

**Table 7 Manipulation of Using Captions on Photos**

Photo	Caption	Note
Photo 1	An #ALLURE a day keeps the bad mood away.	Endorsers are always happy by consuming a cup of Allure green tea latte everyday.
Photo 2	The perfect companion for my daily activities ♥ #wakaixkeitharing.	Endorser feels that she looks perfect in her daily activities by wearing Keith Haring edition Wakai shoes.
Photo 3	@sjoraindonesia #escapetheboredinary. The dancing trees. When you visit #Walakiri, there is no doubt you would be staring at these magnificent trees without feeling bored. Especially during the sunset. It is good to be missed.	Endorser enjoys a drink from @sjoraindonesia, which makes them not bored, like when he is looking at the beauty of Walakiri Beach at dusk.
Photo 4	Good nutrition is the key to good mental and physical health. Stay healthy, everyone!	Endorsers maintain their health by consuming good nutrition from the juice.
Photo 5	As simple as it gets. A quick snap from the majestic view at Piaynemo, Raja Ampat #tunjukkanmomenmu.	Endorsers are satisfied with the results of Samsung cellphone camera photos that are as clear as tangible objects.

Source: Data Analysis

In addition, producers also manipulate the endorser's daily activities into marketing activities. For example, taking photos that seem 'rough' actually increases the chances of the photos being seen by consumers. Consumers do not realise that the photo is a marketing event but is limited to the daily activities of a user who follows on Instagram (see Table 8).

**Table 8 Manipulation of Endorser Activities and Meanings Created in Photos**

Photo	Activity	Meanings from the hidden sign
Photo 1	The endorser placed a cup of green tea latte on the table mat as if the drink was about to be drunk.	Green Tea latte Allure can be consumed every day and can make a happy mood.
Photo 2	The endorser wears canvas shoes while relaxing at the café.	Canvas shoes can be used by women who want to look relaxed but still fashionable.
Photo 3	Endorsers enjoy the view of Walakiri beach to relieve boredom, according to the hashtag of Sjora Indonesia's drink, #escapetheboredinary.	The Mango Peach Smooth Fusion drink makes people who drink it get out of boredom as if they are on vacation to a beautiful beach.
Photo 4	The endorser took a bottle of juice from the box in her bedroom.	Juice as body nutrition can be drunk before the activity in the morning.
Photo 5	Endorser photographing landscapes with cellphones while on vacation in the Raja Ampat islands.	A cellphone is a tool that must be taken when on vacation.

Source: Data Analysis

## DISCUSSION

The increasing number of producers is contesting the market share of a type of product. Therefore, the need to create a marketing communication strategy is a demand that must be met for a brand if it wants to survive in industrial competition. One of the marketing communication strategies carried out by producers is an endorsement on Instagram social media. The use of endorsers in a product creates strong advertising effectiveness. According to Moriarty, Mitchell & Wells (2011) in Fensi & Christian (2018, p. 2-3), this

strengthens the understanding of advertising in an effort to tell stories, evoke emotions, create fantasy, and provide strong visuals.

The author observes that in the photos analysed, some products are marketed. These products are produced by both well-known large producers and small producers who are just starting their business. In fact, both large and small producers continue to try to adapt to the market situation and maintain their existence in the business world (see Table 9). This is because producers consider lower marketing costs, reach segmented consumers and in a short time. Therefore, it can be seen that social media makes it easier for producers to carry out marketing communications. In other words, marketing activities inserted through the tag system in photos on Instagram are common for producers to do.

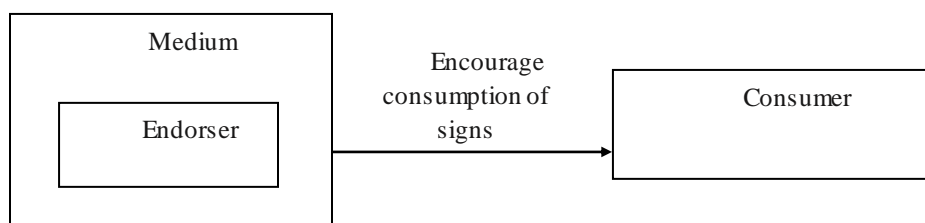
**Table 9 Product and Producer**

Product	Producer
Green tea latte.	Esprecielo.
Customised cellphone case.	The Kase Indonesia.
Canvas shoes.	Wakai.
Mango peach smooth fusion drink.	Nestle – Sjora Indonesia.
Packaged juice drinks.	Naked Press Juicery.
A cellphone with advanced camera features.	Samsung.

Source: Data Analysis

Producers use endorsers as a medium to encourage the consumption of signs to consumers (see Figure 5). Products inserted in endorser activities store certain social signs. In this case, the product (object of consumption) has shifted into signs on the photo.

**Figure 4 Endorsers Encouraging Sign Consumption**



Source: Data Analysis

Signs on endorser photos are absorbed and consumed by consumers. Therefore, these signs indirectly lead to the creation of differences between groups of consumers who consume products and consumers who do not consume products. In other words, before consuming the product, consumers consume signs to have social signs on the product.



When consumers see an endorser's photo on Instagram, they absorb the cues in the photo. Consumers feel the need for consumption objects that are contained through manipulative signs in photos. Then arises the desire to meet the needs by consuming these manipulative signs. The needs felt by consumers are the result of construction from producers to absorb the abundance of their products. Without realising it, consumers continue to consume, without thinking again about their need for the product. As a result, consumers cannot control themselves. This is Baudrillard's (1998) critique of Karl Marx's thinking regarding a person's consumption based on function value and exchange value. According to Baudrillard, consumption is no longer based on the need to fulfil the function value and exchange value but on the value of symbols and sign values.

Baudrillard emphasises that consumption is a matter of the absorption of signs and absorption by signs (2000, p. 260). Through this statement, it is understood that individuals in a consumer society are no longer in direct contact with actual needs. In conditions like this, it can be seen that there is a shift in values embedded through photos on Instagram. Endorser activity in photos reinforces the artificial need for products created by producers. Subtly, consumers are taught that they are an amalgamation of arranged signs, so consumers interpret consumption as a rational action.

A terrible impact in this era of consumption is the generalised logic of signs and covers all aspects of people's lives. People consume the signs that exist on the product precisely to save the production flow of the owners of capital (producers). In the end, Baudrillard's thinking related to the sign production process became an essential factor in understanding consumption activity. A person accepts or rejects something because they understand the signs presented to him through the social media Instagram. This study looks at the manipulation of signs used by producers in endorser activities that are reflected in photos to market their products. It can be said that the sign is something that is put forward.

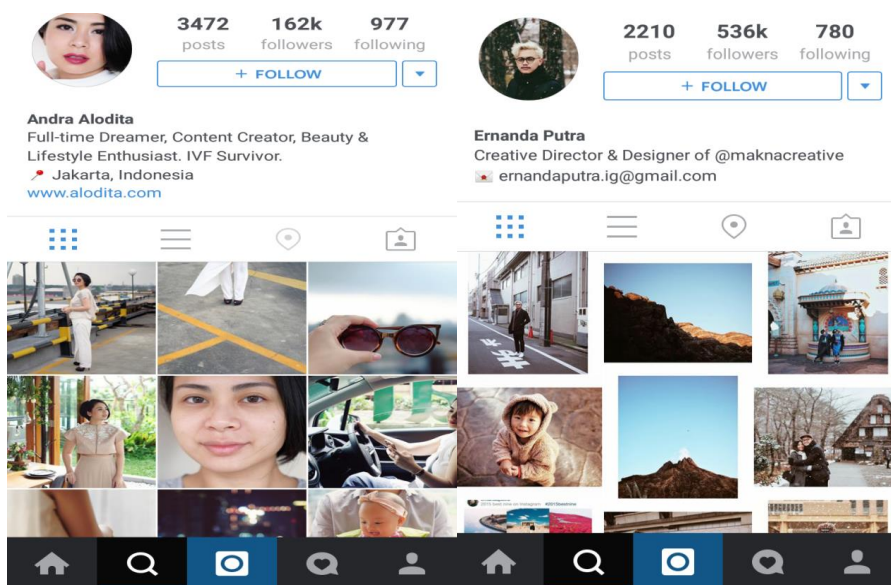
This also confirms that endorsers in photos are intended to secure the flow of production in relation to the shift from a mode of production to the mode of consumption. Different types of products are marketed through the signs stored in the endorser activity on the photo. The product is consumed not because of its function but because of the placement of the product under the logic of the sign, which makes it a consumed commodity.

Another thing that the author found when conducting research is that there is a mutual marketing relationship between producers and endorsers in a photo. On the one hand, producers need endorsers to market their products. On the other hand, endorsers need producers to market themselves. When endorsers market their products, they use the types of endorsements as expressed by McCracken (1989) in the real world, including explicit, implicit, imperative, and co-presentational mode. However, most producers prefer to use an implicit type of endorsement because it seems subtle, vague and more natural, so consumers cannot avoid it. Producers also use the figure of a popular and credible endorser to express their opinions about a product so that consumers trust their opinions and use the product.

For example, in Figure 6, it can be seen that the Instagram feed of the @alodita account owner shows her daily activities. The figure who is widely known as a beauty blogger becomes a reference for women to choose beauty products. Not surprisingly, many beauty products offer endorsements to her.

In line with that, the @ernandaputra account is also very careful about the appearance of his Instagram feed so that it does not seem like advertising. The photos he uploads are also of good quality and attracts several Instagram users. Within one day, he got more than 4000 likes on one photo. He is also consistent in cultivating lifestyle topics.

**Figure 5. Endorser Account Instagram Feed**



Source: [instagram.com/alodita/](https://www.instagram.com/alodita/) & [instagram.com/ernandaputra/](https://www.instagram.com/ernandaputra/)

The two Instagram accounts above show that endorsements can be applied in daily activities. Precisely by showing their daily life, the endorser seems more credible. Endorsers are seen to be more selective in choosing the products they market. The endorser seems to have used the product, so the people who become their followers will feel more interested and believe in using it.

When marketing products, endorsers also try to insert themselves as signs for consumption by producers. The endorser can be replicated and used by other products. Thus, it can be said that there are two hidden interests in the tag system in the photo. These interests include the interests of producers who encourage consumers to consume to maintain the continuity of the production flow and the interests of endorsers in marketing a product in an implicit way to maintain their credibility and existence in endorsements in the virtual world.

The theoretical implication in this study is to support Jean Baudrillard's statement that consumption activities can be carried out in all community activities. People are encouraged to be aware of their inner needs that require fulfilment, even though these needs are often artificial (false needs) created by the owners of capital (producers) by using the media, including social media.

While the practical implications of this research are to make people aware, especially Instagram users, that activities using Instagram social media, such as uploading and viewing photos, cannot run as Instagram was created. Now, Instagram is more often used as a marketing medium. Therefore, people must be careful in using Instagram because signs will be inserted.

## **CONCLUSION**

Semiotic analysis of endorser photos on Instagram shows the creation of artificial needs (false needs) for consumption which leads to the idea that in order to have the social meaning contained in photos, consumers must consume products used by endorsers in photos. The creation of this artificial need is carried out by the owner of the capital (producer) by utilising the sign system on social media applications, including Instagram. The owners of capital (producers) insert signs of consumption in the following ways: first, using Instagram features, such as tags on photos, tags on captions, and hashtags on captions. Second, the use of the product in the endorser's daily activities in the photo. Although sometimes it seems that the two are not related, the activity is witnessed by many followers. For producers, the presence of a crowd (crowd) actually paved the way for their business. The producer realises that the crowd or gathering of people is their target, so that is where they slip the signs of consumption.

Signs are easy to create, then controlled by the owners of capital (producers) for their economic interests. Everything is done by the owners of capital (producers) to encourage consumers to be under the logic of the sign. Thus, the creation of the requirement only needs to perform a sign operation. The tag system on the photo hides two interests. These interests include the interests of producers who encourage consumers to consume in order to maintain the continuity of the production flow and the interests of endorsers in implicitly marketing a product in order to maintain their credibility and existence in endorsements in the virtual world.

## REFERENCES

- Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia. (2015). *Pengguna Internet Indonesia Tahun 2014 Sebanyak 88,1 Juta (34,9%)*. 8 Juni 2015. <http://www.apjii.or.id/read/content/info-terkini/301/pengguna-internet-indonesia-tahun-2014-sebanyak-88.html>.
- Baudrillard, Jean P. (1998). *The Consumer Society Myths and Structures*. London: SAGE Publication.
- Chakraborty, Suman Kalyan & Agrawal, Mayank M. (2005). Impact of Celebrity Endorsements on Overall Brand. <http://www.coolavenues.com/marketing-zone/impact-of-celebrity-endorsements-on-overall-brand>.
- Debasis Pradhan, Israel Duraipandian, & Dhruv Sethi. (2014). Celebrity endorsement: How celebrity–brand–user personality congruence affects brand attitude and purchase intention. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 1-18. DOI: 10.1080/13527266.2014.914561.
- Elwani, Restu Sri & Kurniawan, Firman. (2020). Pemanfaatan Media Sosial Dalam Pemasaran Sosial Bagi Remaja. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 12 (1), 64-80. DOI:10.24912/jk.v12i1.6654.
- Erdogan, Zafer B., & Baker, Michael J. (2005). Celebrity Endorsement: Advertising Agency Managers' Perspective. *The Cyber Journal of Sports Marketing*, 13, 1-15.
- Fensi, Fabianus & Christian, Michael. (2018). Determinan Citra Merek Pada Iklan Product Gawai "Vivo" Berdasarkan Aspek "Celebrity Endorser". *Bricolage*, 4 (2), 163-209.
- Fiske, John. (2002). *Introduction Communication Studies (2nd edition)*. New York: Routledge.
- Hananto, Prio. (2014). Opinion Leader versus New Opinion Leader dalam Komunikasi Pemasaran. *Jurnal Interaksi*, 3 (2), 140-153.
- Ismayanti, N. A., & Santika, I. (2017). Pengaruh Celebrity endorser, Brand Image, Kualitas Product Terhadap Niat Beli Sepatu Olahraga Nike Di Kota Denpasar. *E-Jurnal Manajemen Unud*, 610, 5720-5747.
- Korda, H., & Itani, Z. (2015). Harnessing Social Media for Health Promotion and Behavior Change. *SAGE Journals*, 14 (1), 1-15. (September). DOI: [10.1177/1524839911405850](https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839911405850).
- Kusumasari, D., & Arifianto, S. (2019). Makna Teks Ujaran Kebencian Pada Media Sosial. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 12 (1), 1–15. DOI: [10.24912/jk.v12i1.4045](https://doi.org/10.24912/jk.v12i1.4045).
- Mangold, W.G., & Faulds, D.J. (2009). Social Media: The New Hybrid Element of The Promotion Mix. *Business Horizons*, 52 (4), 357-365.
- Marselina, D., & Siregar, E. H. (2017). Pengaruh Celebrity endorser terhadap Brand Image pada Kosmetik Wardah di Bogor. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Organisasi*, VIII (1), 15-27.
- Marta, Rustono F., & William, Denise M. (2016). Studi Terpaan Media Pemasaran Melalui Posting Instagram Terhadap Ekuitas Merek Pelanggan Sumoboo! (Analisis Eksplanatif pada Komunitas Food Blogger #WTFoodies). *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 8 (1), 68-82.
- McCracken, Grant. (1989). Who is the celebrity endorser? Cultural foundations of the endorsement process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(3), 310-321.

- Natalia, Sheyrent & Rumambi, Leonid J. (2013). Analisa Prediksi/Penilai Efektivitas Penggunaan Selebritis Sebagai Brand Endorser Untuk Membangun Brand Image (Studi Kasus Iklan The Face Shop). *Jurnal Manajemen Pemasaran Petra*, 1 (1), 1-8.
- Costanzo, Paul J., & Goodnight, Janelle E. (2005). Celebrity Endorsements. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 11 (4), 49-62.
- Rini, E. S., & Astuti, D. W. (2012). Pengaruh Agnes Monica Sebagai Celebrity endorser Terhadap Pembentukan Brand Image Honda Vario. *Bisma Jurnal Bisnis dan Manajemen*, 61, 1-12.
- Rodiyaan, G., & Madiawati, P. N. (2016). Pengaruh Celebrity Endorser Agnes Monica Terhadap Brand Image pada Sampo Clear Women. *E-proceeding of Management*, p. 3492.
- Saparso & Lestari, D. (2009). Peranan Endorser Terhadap Brand Image Dari Sudut Pandang Konsumen. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Bisnis*, 93, 161-180.
- Sobur, Alex. (2003). *Semiotika Komunikasi*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Trout, Jack & Ravis, Steven. (2010). *REPOSITIONING: Marketing in an Era of Competition, Change and Crisis*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Sujono, Firman K. (2013). *Manusia dalam Masyarakat Jejaring, Telaah Filsafat Pemikiran Manuel Castells tentang Abad Informasi*. Disertasi. Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Indonesia.
- Tunggal, Immanuel D.A. (2019). Pengaruh Customer Engagement Terhadap Minat Membaca Suara Merdeka Oleh Komunitas. *Jurnal Audience*, 2 (2), 101-115.
- We Are Social. (2015). *Digital, Social & Mobile in 2015*. 1 September 2015. <http://wearesocial.sg/blog/2015/01/digital-social-mobile-2015/>

## Buddhism Inside the Newsroom: An Ethnographic Study of *DAAI TV*

**Wirawan**

LSPR Communication & Business Institute, Jakarta

Email: wirawan\_tan@yahoo.com

*Received Oct. 9, 2020; Revised Jun. 26, 2021; Accepted Jun. 29, 2021*

### Abstract

This ethnographic study aimed to explore the interrelationship between Buddhist values and journalism practice in *DAAI TV* Indonesia. The findings were derived from the fieldwork in the newsroom of *DAAI TV* throughout August 2019 to April 2020. In addition to participatory observation, the researcher also conducted several in-depth interviews and collected some documents, such as photos and journalists' handbook. The results revealed that Buddhism, especially which is taught by Master Cheng Yen as the founder of Tzu Chi, is reflected in the newsroom of *DAAI TV*. Furthermore, the journalism practice actualises the Buddhist-oriented journalism through *sammāvācā* (right speech), *sammākammanta* (right action), and *sammāājīva* (right livelihood). This study argues that *DAAI TV* has balanced the universal values of journalism to fit their own values.

**Keywords:** *DAAI TV, organisational culture, journalism, Buddhism, ethnography, newsroom*

### INTRODUCTION

Religious values play a significant role in journalism practice. Many researches have been conducted to present the argument that both personal and institutional religious beliefs may influence the way news is presented to the audience. In general, there are two important approaches in the study of relationship between religious values and journalism practice. One explores how the news media, with different religious ideology, produces or frames messages (Powell, 2018; Pratiwi, 2018; Susilo, 2016, Susilawati, 2015; Meizita, 2014; Kadewardana, 2008), while the other explores the impact of journalists' religiosity on their professional work (see Steele, 2011; Steele, 2018; Pintak, 2014; Chen, 2009; Underwood, 2009).

Many research findings concluded that religious values may bring deterioration in journalism. For instance, Chen (2009) finds that some Buddhist journalists in Taiwan tend to command the spirit of loyalty before professionalism while covering Buddhist events. Furthermore, Suryani & Priyonggo (2015) conclude that *VOA-Islam* is not objective in producing news about the demonstration against Ahok (Chinese Christian former

governor of Jakarta). Their finding is inline with the study of Susilo (2016), which shows that *Republika* (established by Muslim community) and *Suara Pembaruan* (established by Christian community) are not objective in covering a mosque burning in Papua.

On the other hand, there are also some researches which mentioned that religious values may encourage the journalists to fight for justice. For example, Steele (2011; 2012; 2018) argues that the teaching of Islam motivates the Muslim journalists in Indonesia and Malaysia to actualise "*amar makruf nahi munkar*" (commanding right, forbidding wrong) by supporting the marginalised people in their struggle against uncontrollable power of state or by reporting corruption among political elites. Therefore, Steele (2011) concludes that those practices are similar with the 'watchdog' role in Western journalism. Steele's finding shares a similar pattern with Pintak's survey (2014) toward Muslim journalists in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Arab countries. Pintak (2014) introduces that Muslim journalists in those countries still rest on journalism universal principles but they shape those to fit their own local beliefs.

Several news media in Indonesia are famous because of their religious background. For example, *Republika* is well-known because of its Islamic ideology and its direct affiliation with Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia (Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals) (Steele, 2018). While *Kompas* is recognised for its Catholic founders; as well as *Suara Pembaruan* is discussed because of its history and affiliation with Partai Kristen Indonesia (Christian Indonesian Party) (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). In addition, there is also *DAAI TV* which is established by Yayasan Buddha Tzu Chi (Tzu Chi Buddhist Foundation) (Tzu Chi, 2014).

This research will explore the interrelationship between Buddhist values and journalism practice in *DAAI TV* Indonesia. According to Merrill (in Pintak, 2013), exploring journalistic values outside the USA and Western Europe guides to the development that moves beyond the 'arrogant and ethnocentric' efforts by some US scholars to compel other journalistic culture to fit in the American ethics. There are two main reasons why *DAAI TV* is necessary to be studied. First, this media exists in the Muslim-majority country where the Buddhists are only about 0.72% of total population in Indonesia (BPS, 2010). Originally based in Taiwan, the TV station extended its operation in Indonesia in 2005 (Tzu Chi, 2014). To survive, *DAAI TV* does not only broadcast programmes about Buddhism and its organisation, but also other genres, such as current affairs and magazine; feature and documentary; talk show and variety show; motivation and spirituality; kids programme; as well as some based-on-true-story dramas. Additionally, *DAAI TV* also produces special programme throughout Ramadan (Islamic fasting month), which is *Harmoni Ramadan*. Second, this TV station is distinctive because it does not broadcast any violence, conflict, corruption, political issues, and crime. Meanwhile, these topics are common in news reporting. According to Andriani (2015), this happens because of the peace journalism principles in *DAAI TV*.



Study on the content of *DAAI TV* is actually done by several researchers, both in Taiwan and Indonesia (Liao, 2011; Liao, 2013; Andriani, 2015; Saputra, 2015; Frins, 2016). Therefore, this study will not focus on the contents but rather on the newsroom routine and its organisational values. Studying Buddhist values in the context of organisation is important. Brummans & Hwang (2010) stated that some researches have been conducted to show the advantages of implementing Buddhist values in the organisation. For instance, Brummans & Hwang (2010) revealed that Tzu Chi organisation members engage in voluntary programme seriously yet with ease and happiness. While Kernochan et al. (2007) found that compassion, mindfulness, and the no-self teaching of Buddhism make the learning process in the classroom be more effective and meaningful.

However, the investigation on how Buddhist values empirically affect the newsroom of media organisation and journalism practice is still relatively limited, particularly in the context of Muslim-majority country such as Indonesia. Thus, this research is done to fill this gap and to answer the question of (1) how Buddhist values shapes *DAAI TV* organisational culture; and (2) how their values are internalised through their journalistic practice?

The organisational culture theory by Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) will be used. The word 'culture' in this theory is not just about ethnicity, race, or people's background. In the context of organisation, Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) define culture as the way to live within an organisation which involves emotional and psychological atmosphere. Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) state that organisational culture theory required the researchers to observe, record, and make sense of organisational members' communicative behaviour (West & Turner, 2010).

Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo advocate three assumptions in understanding organisational culture theory: (1) members of an organisation create and maintain a shared sense of organisation reality, making them understand more about the value of their organisation; (2) members of an organisation use and interpret symbols; and (3) organisational cultures and its interpretation of actions are diverse across organisation (West & Turner, 2010).

The first assumption emphasises the aspect of organisation's values. They define values as principles or standards that inform the members about what is important (in West & Turner, 2010). The second assumption highlights the use and the interpretation of verbal and nonverbal symbols that communicate organisation's values. While the third assumption focuses on the variety of organisational cultures.

The first and the second assumption of this theory are used in this current research to analyse *DAAI TV* values and how the members use and interpret verbal and nonverbal symbols to communicate their values. This is important to empirically claim that *DAAI TV*



is based on Buddhist values.

In the context of news media organisations, their values may influence the newsroom activity. For instance, Everbach (2006) concludes that women who lead *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* in the USA bring feminine values and their experiences as women into the newsroom, such as family-friendly policies, candour, collaboration, and communication. Therefore, it makes the employees feel satisfied and motivated because of the egalitarian work atmosphere. Another example comes from *Republika*. Steele (2018) reports that because of its Islamic values, *Republika* tends to focus more on Islamic political parties as well as topics that are related to Muslim community (Steele, 2018).

The concept of Buddhist-oriented journalism will be implemented to analyse DAAI TV's journalistic activities. In fact, the discussion on Buddhism and journalism is strictly limited in the Muslim-majority country, such as Indonesia. Nevertheless, researches on Islam, media, and journalistic activity are enormous. There are 18 Islamic academic institutions in Indonesia that provide journalism education in the perspective of *dakwah* (Islamic propagation) (Steele, 2012).

Before elaborating the interrelationship between Buddhism and journalism, it is better to begin with a brief explanation about Buddhism itself. This belief originated in India and was firstly taught by Siddhartha Gautama. Gethin (1998) notes that as the time goes by, Buddhism is divided into three main traditions: *Theravada* (growing rapidly in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos); *Mahayana* (widely spread in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam); and also *Vajrayana* (popular in Tibet, Mongolia, and Nepal).

Varley (2012) explains that generally the teaching of Buddhism can be summarised into four fundamental statements: (1) the reality of suffering; (2) the cause of suffering; (3) the cessation of suffering; and (4) the way to the cessation of suffering or is usually known as *ariya atthangika magga* (The Noble Eightfold Path). Additionally, Gunaratne (2009) describes that The Noble Eightfold Path consists of three dimensions: *pañña* (wisdom), *sila* (morality), and *samādhi* (concentration). *Pañña* (wisdom) dimension includes two paths: *sammāditthi* (right view) and *sammāsankappa* (right thought). *Sila* (morality) dimension involves three paths: *sammāvācā* (right speech), *sammākammanta* (right action), and *sammāājīva* (right livelihood). *Samādhi* (concentration) dimension consists of three paths: *sammāvāyāma* (right effort), *sammāsati* (right mindfulness), and *sammāsamādhi* (right concentration) (Gunaratne, 2009).

McGill (2008) states that journalism which is based on Buddhist teaching would possess two characteristics. First, a journalism of healing because the purpose of Buddhism is realising the end of suffering. Buddhist-oriented journalism therefore is aimed at helping people solve their personal suffering and helping society heal the sorrow caused by injustice, resentment, exclusion, and physical violence. Second, a journalism of timely,

truthful, and helpful speech grounded in The Noble Eightfold Path.

Senarath (2015) asserts that *sila* (morality) dimension contains a set of ethics and morals for journalists to follow. In addition, Pearson & Senarath (2015) mention that the aspect of words, actions, and occupation in *sila* dimension supports the professional ethical codes for journalists, but these values stand in need of an articulated argument for their existence. They highlight that most of the international ethical codes of journalism practice were derived from Anglo-American approach. Therefore, Pearson & Senarath (2015) elaborate the relevance of *sila* dimension in the context of journalism practice. This current study attempts to explore Pearson & Senarath's elaboration of *sila* dimension in the context of *DAAI TV*.

## METHOD

This qualitative research employs interpretive paradigm with an ethnographic method. Basically, ethnographic method is used to describe and interpret the patterns of values, behaviours, beliefs, and language that are shared and learned in a particular culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2007). This method requires the researcher to conduct the study in the natural setting of the observed group (Fetterman, 2010), in this context, *DAAI TV* journalists. It means that researcher needs to live in and interact with the observed group for a certain period of time to scrutinise and learn their behaviour without any controlled settings.

To do so, the researcher conducted partial immersion of fieldwork (Delamont, 2007) from August 2019 to April 2020. Specifically, this kind of fieldwork enables researcher to oscillate between the site of the study, university, and home (Delamont, 2007). Throughout the fieldwork period, the researcher involved in *DAAI TV* internship programme and arranged some in-depth interviews with several journalists.

In the internship programme, the researcher was assigned to assist Current Affair and Magazine desk, particularly in *Halo Indonesia's* news programme. The researcher carried out participatory observation by engaging in daily conversation and news production activities, such as editorial meeting, news event coverage, composing news script, managing YouTube channel, as well as directing the floor. The researcher wrote down what was seen, heard, and experienced in a field note; collected the journalists' handbook; and also took some photos of the work area. The permission to use these data throughout the internship programme is legally received.

Some in-depth interviews with *DAAI TV* journalists were arranged. There are 7 informants who were interviewed: Paulus Florianus (programme manager), Zulfril Adha Putra (producer), Anthony Hongrizal (producer), Astia Dika (producer), Andrew Pakpahan (reporter), Prissilia Claudia (reporter), along with Reyhan as the representative of HRD

Department. They were chosen because they have worked in *DAAI TV* for more than a year. Additionally, each of them also comes from different social background, such as gender, ethnicity, and religion. The informants were interviewed in several occasion from March to April 2020. This was done to avoid similar answers at the same time. But, unfortunately, due to the pandemic situation and the regulation of *DAAI TV* during that period, the researcher was only allowed to conduct the interview through voice/video calls.

Finally, all the data were transcribed before being analysed by using inductive approach. The data were categorised into a set of themes. The themes were formulated on resemblances, associations, and dissimilarities over sets of data (Gibson & Brown, 2009).

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

*DAAI TV* is located in the area of Tzu Chi Center, North Jakarta, along with the office of Tzu Chi Foundation and Tzu Chi School. From the street, everyone can see obviously that there are three flags on the building's front yard: the national flag which stands in the middle of Tzu Chi flag and international Buddhist flag. The building architecture demonstrates oriental style, so does the lobby interior that is dominated with wood, bamboo, and some Chinese calligraphy works. Photographs of the Buddha and the founder Master Cheng Yen are hanging on some side of the wall. Several Buddhist-related miniatures, i.e. Borobudur Temple and Buddha sculpture, are displayed in some spots. All these reflect that *DAAI TV* is part of Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, which originated in Taiwan.

Precisely, it was on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019, when the researcher got into the newsroom for the first time to meet Reyhan, the HRD staff, for the internship briefing. While Reyhan was preparing the files, the researcher waited near a rattan table. By sitting there, the researcher could observe that journalists who work in *DAAI TV* are visibly heterogeneous. There are some women journalists who are wearing veil and also not all journalists are Chinese.

Despite of the fact that *DAAI TV* was established by Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, the members of this organisation come from different religion, race, and social background. There are 3 values that unite the organisation members, specifically (1) *gǎn ēn* or gratitude; (2) *zūn zhòng* or respect; and (3) *ài* or love. As what West & Turner (2010) mentioned, these values inform the members what is important. They become the direction for the members to do their professional job and daily interaction. Reyhan identifies the values as the ship that will carry the members to the same destination. Simultaneously, as mentioned in the second assumption of the organisational culture theory, organisational values are actualised through verbal and nonverbal communication.

Initially, the researcher will describe how *DAAI TV* journalists implement the first value, that is gratitude. Every morning, before starting the live broadcast at 9 a.m., the programme director always asks the floor director to lead the morning prayer. All crews in the studio and master control room pray in their own beliefs. According to the programme manager, Paulus Florianus, this activity symbolises gratitude and also the mutual respect because they are not forced to pray in a particular way.

In some occasion, the journalists often say “*gǎn ēn*” after helping each other. The email of acceptance that the researcher received from *DAAI TV* also mentioned the phrase “*gǎn ēn*” at the closing. Astia Dika, the producer of *DAAI Inspirasi* and *#SebarkanKebaikan*, said that basically, “*gǎn ēn*” means deeper than just “thank you”. However, the researcher occasionally still heard they expressed “thank you” with “*terima kasih*” or “*makasih*”.

How they convey gratitude is also reflected while eating. Every day at 12 p.m., they will stop their activity to have their lunch together at the canteen of Tzu Chi Center. This canteen only provides vegetarian food and beverages. All employee do not need to pay and they are allowed to scoop out the food by themselves. At the first day of researcher’s internship programme, the journalists reminded the researcher about the responsibility to eat up everything taken. This is how they show gratitude for their food. They said that it would be embarrassing if someone got caught throwing away their food into the rubbish bin.

Interestingly, not all journalists and employees are vegetarian. In contrast, Tzu Chi Center is a vegetarian zone. Thus, they have to obey the regulation for not bringing or consuming non-vegetarian food as long as they are still in the office. Besides, although the practice of vegetarianism is taught by Master Cheng Yen, the members of *DAAI TV* do not perceive this regulation as an effort to covert them into Buddhist.

As mentioned by Davidson (2003), among all Buddhist traditions, vegetarianism is only practised strictly by Mahayana monks and nuns. Although Buddhism exactly forbids killing, including animals, Buddha himself never compelled his disciples to be vegetarian. As mentioned in Tipitaka (Buddhist holy scripture), specifically in Majjhima Nikaya 55, Buddha allowed his disciples to consume meat only in three requirements: (1) not be seen; (2) not be heard; and (3) not be suspected that the animal have been slaughtered particularly to feed a monk. However, for the reason that Master Cheng Yen was ordained in Mahayana tradition (Huang, 2008), she and her disciples practise vegetarianism habitually.

Even though related to Mahayana Buddhism, the members of *DAAI TV* identify vegetarianism as part of healthy lifestyle and contribution to the green environment. “Vegetarianism is not bad. It leads someone to a healthier life, doesn’t it? So I respect this regulation. Not to mention, the food is also delicious!” the reporter, Prissilia Claudia (1<sup>st</sup>

April 2020), said while giggling.

“Vegetarianism looks like part of Buddhism because it is promoted by Master Cheng Yen and Tzu Chi volunteers. However, not all Buddhists are vegetarian, aren’t they? It has become a lifestyle or choice for someone. Which lifestyle would someone like to choose? So I do not think that it is related to Buddhism.” (Astia Dika, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020)

“One of the philosophy in Tzu Chi it to love other beings. Vegetarianism is one of the way to actualise it. Besides that, by being vegetarian, we can protect the earth, contribute to the green environment, and also maintain health. Personally, I think it is beneficial. Not a problem.” (Paulus Florianus, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2020)

The act of eating up cleanly and the interpretation of vegetarianism do not just happen spontaneously. It needs a process of socialisation. Astia Dika said that the journalists need to know the advantages of vegetarianism because they are expected to promote it to the society.

The second organisational value is respect. This is expressed through compassionate communication. Although anger and disappointment may arise in a teamwork, but everything needs to be delivered without using harsh words. There was a moment when Zulfril, the producer, asked the researcher to come to his desk. He said that the researcher’s news script was not proportional. He pointed out what was not clear and asked the researcher to revise. That instruction was given without any intimidating words.

Asking reporters to come to his desk and revise their news script is a normal scene. But, Prissilia said that the way the producer deliver the command is different. She explained that her friends in other news media are used to face cruel treatment from their boss, with the argument that “journalists should have strong mentality”. Zulfril explained why everything should be delivered politely. Basically, it is because every human being does not want to be treated rudely. Besides, harsh words are not always effective. Even worse, it could make the reporters grumbling at him. Anthony, the producer of *DAAI Mandarin*, agrees with Zulfril. If he finds out that the reporters make any mistakes, he will approach them personally for discussion. Astia Dika also implements this method. She said that problem can only be solved with “heart to heart approach”.

Furthermore, the value of respect is visible through their appearance. The journalists have to wear a complete uniform with formal trousers not only when they are in the newsroom, but also in the field. Male journalists in *DAAI TV* are not allowed to lengthen their hair, moustache, and beard. While the female journalists are not allowed to colour their hair and nails, neither are they allowed to apply luxurious makeup and accessories.

All these are strictly regulated by the organisation. Reyhan, the HRD staff, said that this aims to establish humble, polite, and presentable journalists because they represent the organisation, especially when they work in the field or cover social events. For Prissilia, the one who works mostly in the field, this regulation makes her always ready to meet people. Additionally, Reyhan mentioned that the regulation of how they should dress up is rooted from the Master Cheng Yen's moderation.

No footwear is allowed inside the building of Tzu Chi Center. The security who is in charge at the lobby will ask politely all guests that come to or are invited to *DAAI TV* to take off their footwear. They may carry their footwear by bags that are intentionally provided. Otherwise, they may leave their footwear at the shoe rack. According to Reyhan, this is intended to keep the building clean and to respect the janitors.

Subsequently, love is the third organisational value. It controls how the journalists and the employees express concerns to each other. Teasing with jokes is the simplest example. Throughout the fieldwork, the researcher observed that in some occasions, the journalists were participating in jokes to make the newsroom more alive. Andrew, the reporter, said that jokes just flow spontaneously when they are not really hectic. In contrast, Andrew asserted that they will be serious if it is needed. Prissilia mentioned that teasing the team with jokes is the way to support each other. Meanwhile, Astia Dika said that no one would forbid joking as long as it did not disturb the job. "We cannot feel the warmth if we do not bond as a family," Astia said.

The editorial meeting in *Halo Indonesia* is performed in a relaxed atmosphere. Every Thursday at 3 p.m, the meeting is held regularly in the library and led by Zulfril. Some reporters sit on sofa and some on floor. They plan the agenda for tomorrow's Friday until one week ahead. Zulfril also uses this moment as a group sharing session. For instance, Zulfril ever asked the reporters to share their experiences covering Tzu Chi's voluntary events. At the end, he advised the reporters to be willing to help Tzu Chi's volunteers if their journalistic tasks are done.

On Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019, Riska, the new reporter, joined the *Halo Indonesia's* team. The way the senior reporters introduced her to their daily tasks also reflects the love value. For example, Prissilia accompanied Riska to go to the master control room and introduced her to the work flow as a PIC. In *Halo Indonesia's* desk, PIC refers to a reporter who just stays at the newsroom to manage the daily broadcast for a week. The PIC is responsible to contact guests for the daily talk show segment, prepare the daily rundown, arrange the questions list for talk show segment, collect the news script from the other reporters, and manage the transportation for the other's field duty. The senior reporters also taught the researcher a lot of things during the fieldwork: writing news script, recording voice over, editing video thumbnail, as well as directing the floor. Besides joking, teaching is their love language.

Their love value is not only shared to the other members of *DAAI TV*, but also more, to the whole human beings. The researcher observed that each journalist has a cylinder bamboo-like moneybox on their own desk. The money they donate to the moneybox will be collected regularly and used for charity and philanthropic programme that is organised by Tzu Chi Foundation.

This bamboo-like moneybox has its own story related to the initiation of Tzu Chi in Taiwan. According to their website (Tzu Chi, n.d.), Master Cheng Yen and her five disciples distributed the bamboo-like moneybox to some houses. The money they collected then be used for helping the poor. This movement attracted more and more people to participate. Finally, in May, 1966, the social organisation of Tzu Chi was established with the spirit of “small donation, great merit”.

The charity through bamboo-like moneybox is related the *bodhisattva*’s excellence. Literally, *bodhisattva* means ‘enlightenment beings’ (Varley, 2012). In Mahayana Buddhism, a *bodhisattva* is perceived as a figure who takes a vow to help others along the path to realise the enlightenment. There are six values of a *bodhisattva*’s excellence: *dana* (generosity), *sila* (morality), *kshanti* (patience), *virya* (diligence), *dhyana* (concentration), and *prajna* (wisdom) (Varley, 2012). Specifically, this philanthropic movement reflects the *dana* (generosity).

Master Cheng Yen’s influence is not only reflected inside the organisation, but also through the TV screen and journalistic activities. For instance, *DAAI TV* does not broadcast any scene which presents non-vegetarian culinary. Once, the researcher ever suggested to cover a culinary festival. But, Media, the reporter, argued that covering culinary festival is risky. The pictures would be monotonous because not all the food is vegetarian food.

Fundamentally, journalism practice in *DAAI TV* rests on the motto of “truth, virtue, and aesthetics”. It means that any information that contains only truth will not be published by *DAAI TV*. A fire incident that happened on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 in Cawang, East Jakarta will be a good example to explain this practice. In the editorial meeting on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Zulfril asked Riska the new reporter to cover that fire incident. Everyone knows that the fire incident was a factual event. However, Zulfril asserted that incident coverage in *DAAI TV* should not focus on the sorrow, victims, and the damage. He said that *DAAI TV* must evoke optimism. Therefore, Zulfril required Riska to report what kind of help that the residents had got and what was still needed. Moreover, the visual is not allowed to exploit their misery.

The researcher was the person who recorded the voice over script. When Riska’s news

story was broadcasted, there was no crying or chaotic scene. Instead, the visual showed the environment around the shelter post, food distribution, children's activity, as well as the arrival of a mobile public library bus. Some scenes showed the ruined building to demonstrate the current situation. In the very first minute of the news story, the scene presented a resident who was being interviewed and expressing his gratitude to the benefactors and volunteers. The resident mentioned some obtained helps and also the specific support that was still desired. This information could invite other volunteer to help and donate.

From this case, the event itself is truth. What makes the truth is worth to be reported because it provides a chance to help. This also explains the second element of their motto, that is virtue. According to *DAAI TV* journalists' handbook, virtue means everything that brings good impact. It means that the journalists are required to present information which contains kindness, inspiration, manners, optimism, positive behaviour, stimulus to commit good, morality, and virtuous character. Implicitly, everything that is related to crimes, corruption, gossip, sexual scandal, demonstration, and political issues are out of this standard.

By performing virtue as their motto, it is just like "killing two birds with one stone". It means that on one side the journalists commit their responsibility to share information to the society, but on the other side, they also make merit through two conditions: (1) they help the society by publishing their problem; (2) they provide a chance for the audience to participate doing good by helping others. Prissilia has her own story. She told the researcher that once she has ever covered a story of a female driver of *ojek* (motorcycle taxi). The driver always brought her child while transporting passengers. One day, someone contacted *DAAI TV* after watching the news story. It turns out that the person owns a daycare. The person offered a help and allowed the driver to leave her child at the daycare without any charge.

Andrew, the reporter, said that helping people can be done both directly and indirectly. Paulus has a similar point of view. He likened the journalist to a priest. He said that a priest can only evoke people who come to the church to commit good, but a journalist through mass media can evoke more people to do the same. For Paulus, it would be a merit for him if he could produce inspiring news that motivate people to help others.

This finding is in line with Steele's work (2011). For Muslim journalists in Indonesia and Malaysia, they perceive their journalistic activity as a part of the command from the Quran, that is "*amar makruf nahi munkar*" (commanding right, forbidding wrong). Even some journalists in Steele's finding described their practice as prophetic journalism, which refers to the characteristic of Prophet Muhammad: honest, reliable, intelligent, and bringing the messages from Allah (Mahfud, 2014). Basically, prophetic journalism means an effort to tell the unpleasant truth about the society just as prophets that opposed



injustice and corruption (Steele, 2012).

However, what makes *DAAI TV* different is because the journalists do not interpret their practice according to their own personal religious beliefs. They explained their responsibility from the same basis: the motto of *DAAI TV*, especially the 'virtue' aspect.

The last motto, the aesthetics, is actualised through how they shoot the scenes. They are not allowed to exploit the sorrow. Specifically, *DAAI TV* journalists' handbook defines the aesthetics as something that brings happiness, harmony, social order, love, collaboration, responsibility, ethics, and amusement through the use of language, voice, and visual image.

Furthermore, how *DAAI TV* criticises the government is not as straightforward as other media. For instance, on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, *Halo Indonesia* invited Husnin, a resident of Kampung Muara Baru, and Nirwono Joga, an academic, to their talk show segment. They discussed land subsidence phenomenon that happened in North Jakarta. Husnis got the first chance to tell what he felt as someone who lived near an embankment in North Jakarta. He reported that the water level almost reached the top of the embankment. Nirwono got the second chance. He explained why this could happen: massive groundwater extraction, mega construction project, and the land type in this area. Then, Nirwono recommended two ideas: (1) the government should stop using groundwater; and (2) the government should relocate the residents near the embankment as soon as possible.

The researcher thought that this segment was an attempt to be loyal to the public as what Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007) pointed out as elements of journalism. Besides, through this segment, *DAAI TV* also provides a forum for public discussion as well as conducts journalism role as a watchdog. Nevertheless, they do not implement this practice in a cynical way, in order to uphold their motto, especially the 'aesthetics' that commands harmony, social order, love, collaboration, etc. As the programme manager who acts out the role of editor-in-chief in *DAAI TV*, Paulus said that they do not just criticise but they give solution. Moreover, he mentioned that he does not prefer using the word 'criticise' because it sounds harsh, that is avoided. Therefore, he highlighted the word 'suggestion'.

In contrast to Steele's finding where the journalists mentioned some Islamic phrase to explain their responsibility, this current study revealed that all informants did not mention any religious phrase to explain what they do. Specifically, no informants refer to Tipitaka. But, interestingly, according to the researcher's analysis and interpretation, the practice of journalism in *DAAI TV* actualises Buddhist-oriented journalism. Pearson & Senarath (2015) elaborate that in the context of morality, Buddhist-oriented journalism can be actualised through *sammāvācā* (right speech), *sammākammanta* (right action), and *sammāājīva* (right livelihood).

Truth is a substantial thing for *DAAI TV* journalists. Their handbook mentioned that information which contains ‘truth’ should be actual, contextual, clear, covering both/all sides, and valid both epistemologically and semantically. Therefore, the journalists must verify each information before reporting it to the audience. They perceive verification in the same way the other journalists do. But, more importantly, this matches the elements of *sammāvācā* (right speech) as proposed by Pearson & Senarath (2015). In the context of *Abhayarājakumāra Sutta*, *Majjhima Nikaya* 58 (Thanissaro, 1997), Buddha himself would never deliver information that was unfactual, untrue, unbeneficial, not liked by others, and disagreeable. Even when the information was true, factual, liked by other, and agreeable, but had no advantages, Buddha would also not express it. The researcher argues that this is why *DAAI TV* does not broadcast any gossip or infotainment because those programmes only provide unverified rumours and have no correlation with the public interest. Paulus, the programme manager, explained that gossip or infotainment could be true but it has no virtue. Thus, gossip or infotainment is not in line with their motto.

Pearson & Senarath (2015) explain that based on *Samyutta Nikaya* 45.8, right action means abstaining from killing, stealing, and unchastity. They argue that media contents that are based on Buddhist values should not present these three aspects. They believe that media contents could encourage audience to do the same. The researcher argues that this is the background why *DAAI TV* does not present any crimes coverage or sexual scandal. Paulus mentioned that crime coverage, same as gossip, has no virtue and aesthetics elements. The journalists are also not allowed to commit murder, thievery, and sexual abuse because such things may lead them to the police. In the context of using other’s visual material or data, the journalists are required to mention clearly the original source.

The last aspect of Buddhist morality is right livelihood. Generally, it discusses appropriate jobs. Pearson & Senarath (2015) explain that, based on *Samyutta Nikaya* 45.8, appropriate job does not involve dishonesty and wrong livelihood. In *Anguttara Nikaya* 5.1777 (Access to Insight, 2013), Buddha explained that there are five inappropriate jobs: trafficking of human beings, weapons, meat, intoxicants, and poisons. Definitely, being a journalist is not categorised as an inappropriate job. In the context of *DAAI TV*, it is clearly mentioned in their handbook that all journalists have to obey the journalism ethics and law. It is strictly regulated that they are not allowed to collect money or any expensive stuffs as their compensation. The researcher perceives this as the attempt to avoid the abuse of professional status.

In addition, Gunaratne (2009) suggests that Buddhist-oriented journalism should not depend on profit and commercials as their income. He says that dependency on

commercials may raise *tanhā* (desire), the source of *dukkha* (suffering). He proposes the implementation of public-supported funding programme. Surprisingly, this is also done by *DAAI TV* through the strategy of “Sahabat DAAI” (Friends of DAAI). Because there are no commercial ads in *DAAI TV*, they invite the society to contribute as donators. Paulus mentioned that “Sahabat DAAI” is intended to encourage more people to watch and support *DAAI TV* through donation.

Although realising Buddhist-oriented journalism, *DAAI TV* does not name their practice as it is. They decide to name their practice as “humanitarian journalism”, precisely as mentioned in their journalists’ handbook. *DAAI TV* defines humanitarian journalism as the activity which is based on journalism principles and humanity in delivering clear, meaningful, and optimistic information for a better character change. The study of Huang (2008) may help explaining this phenomenon. Huang (2008) reports that even though it was founded by a Buddhist nun, Tzu Chi annual gathering in Taiwan was not talking about religious activities, such as chanting, meditation, or charismatic healing, but rather about secular work, such as recycling garbage and voluntary programme. However, Huang (2008) states that the essence is still perceived as a way to become a *bodhisattva*. Parallel with Huang’s finding, this research argues that *DAAI TV* prefers using secular phrase to religious phrase.

## CONCLUSION

Buddhist values, especially which are taught by Master Cheng Yen, is reflected through their organisational culture and journalistic activity. From eating vegetarian food to delivering true, helpful, and inspiring information, all of them are related to Buddhism. However, the journalists do not explain what they do by using religious phrase, neither do they refer to Buddhism. They talked in the same basis: the motto of *DAAI TV* journalism practice.

Telling the truth is essential for every press institution. But, each media has their own way to construct truth. According to Pintak (2014), truth is contextual, shaped by social and political atmosphere where the journalists work. Similarly, Hanitzsch (2007) mentions that for those who believe in subjectivism, they agree on the notion that there is no objective news. For *DAAI TV*, telling truth is a must, but not all truth should be reported. They only deliver truth that is beneficial, inspiring, optimistic, and other criteria that meets the element of virtue and aesthetics. To do so, they apply the discipline of verification.

This TV station also provides a forum for public discussion and acts out the role as the ‘watchdog’. But, the journalists perform such things in their own way, not as cynical and straightforward as other media. The purpose is to uphold the element of ‘aesthetics’ that requires harmony, social order, love, collaboration, etc.

Besides truth and power control, the other journalistic value is independency. According to Akhavan-Majid (in Gutsche Jr. & Salkin, 2011), independency is the editorial autonomy to be free from the intervention of the government and business institutions. The researcher argues that *DAAI TV* is independent from the government and business interest because they do not deliver any political issues, neither do they rely on commercial ads. In order to be sustainable, they invite the participation from the society through “Sahabat DAAI”. Nevertheless, *DAAI TV* cannot be really independent from the religious institution, Tzu Chi. It is just because *DAAI TV* is owned by Tzu Chi and be a part of its humanitarian mission. According to Zulfril, there are no media which can be totally independent from the owner. He asserted that the intervention is actualised through the obligation to broadcast kindness-only contents.

Overall, this research reveals that *DAAI TV* has adapted the universal values of journalism, specifically truth, power control, as well as independency, and adjusted those to fit their own Buddhist-oriented journalism. This finding supports Pintak’s argument (2013) that journalistic norms are contextual, constructed by global standards and local values such as culture, religion, and political atmosphere.

However, due to the focus on journalism practice, this ethnographic research does not explore *DAAI TV* as a whole. The next researcher may study the interrelationship between Buddhist values in *DAAI TV* and other aspects, such as media management, business model, PR & marketing strategy, job satisfaction, religious literacy, and so on. Additionally, this study also has limitation in describing the dependency between *DAAI TV* and Tzu Chi Foundation. The next researcher may use different methods, theories, or concepts to explore this dependency deeper, such as media hegemony and mediatisation of religion.

## REFERENCES

- Access to Insight. (2013, November 30). Right livelihood: Samma ajivo. <https://www.accesstoinight.org/ptf/dhamma/sacca/sacca4/samma-ajivo/index.html>
- Andriani, M. (2015). *Manajemen pemberitaan program siaran “Halo Indonesia” di DAAI TV: Sebuah studi kasus* [Bachelor Thesis, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara].
- Aritonang, J. S., & Steenbrink, K. A. (Eds.). (2008). *A history of Christianity in Indonesia* (Vol. 35). Leiden: Brill.
- BPS. (2010). *Sensus Penduduk 2010*. <https://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site?id=0000000000&wilayah=Indonesia>

- Brummans, B. H., & Hwang, J. M. (2010). Tzu Chi's organizing for a compassionate world: Insights into the communicative praxis of a Buddhist organization. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 3(2), 136-163. DOI: [10.1080/17513051003611610](https://doi.org/10.1080/17513051003611610)
- Chen, C. H. (2009). Reporting Buddhism in Taiwan. *Journalism Practice*, 3:4, 439-455. DOI: [10.1080/17512780903010843](https://doi.org/10.1080/17512780903010843)
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. California: Sage Publications.
- Davidson, J. A. (2003). World religions and the vegetarian diet. *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 14(2), 8.
- Delamont, S. (2007). Ethnography and participant observation. In C. Seale, G. Gobo, et al. (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice* (pp. 205-217). Sage.
- Everbach, T. (2006). The culture of a women-led newspaper: An ethnographic study of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. *J&MC Quarterly*, 83(3), 477-493. DOI: [10.1177/107769900608300301](https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900608300301)
- Fetterman, D. M. (2010). *Ethnography: Step by step*. California: SAGE Publications.
- Frins, C. (2016). *Representasi budaya humanis dalam program jejak cinta kasih di daai tv (Analisis semiotika Roland Barthes)* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara).
- Gethin, R. (1998). *The foundations of Buddhism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gibson, W. J. & Brown, A. (2009). *Working with qualitative data*. London: Sage Publications.
- Gunaratne, S. A. (2009). Buddhist goals of journalism and the news paradigm. *Javnost-The Public*, 16(2), 61-75. DOI: [10.1080/13183222.2009.11009004](https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2009.11009004)
- Gunaratne, S. A., Pearson, M., & Senarath, S. (Eds.). (2015). *Mindful journalism and news ethics in the digital era: A Buddhist approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Gutsche Jr, R. E., & Salkin, E. R. (2011). News stories: An exploration of independence within post-secondary journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 5(2), 193-209.
- Hanitzsch, T. (2007). Deconstructing journalism culture: Toward a universal theory. *Communication Theory*, 17(4), 367– 385. DOI: [10.1111/j.1468-2885.2007.00303.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2007.00303.x)
- Huang, C. J. (2008). Gendered Charisma in the Buddhist Tzu Chi (Ciji) Movement. *Nova Religio*, 12(2), 29-47. DOI: [10.1525/nr.2008.12.2.29](https://doi.org/10.1525/nr.2008.12.2.29)
- Kadewandana, D. (2008). Konstruksi realitas di media massa: Analisis framing terhadap pemberitaan Baitul Muslimin Indonesia PDI-P di Harian Kompas dan Republika. [Bachelor Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah].
- Kernochan, R. A., McCormick, D. W., & White, J. A. (2007). Spirituality and the managementteacher. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 16, 61 75. DOI: [10.1177/1056492606297545](https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492606297545)
- Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2007). *The elements of journalism: What newspeople should know and the public should expect*. New York: Three Rivers Press (CA).
- Kung, M. C. (2011). *Memahami Buddhisme Tradisi Mahayana* (F. Neo, Trans.). Kamadhis

- UGM. (Original work published n.d.)
- Liao, P. R. (2011). *Media representation of Buddhist women in Taiwan: a case study of Da-Ai drama* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds].
- Liao, P. R. (2013). Imagining 'human Bodhisattva' via televisual discourse: media platform of the Tzu-Chi organisation. *Contemporary Buddhism*, 14(2), 284-297. DOI: [10.1080/14639947.2013.832083](https://doi.org/10.1080/14639947.2013.832083)
- Mahfud, C. (2014). Ideologi media Islam Indonesia dalam agenda dakwah: antara jurnalisme profetik dan jurnalisme provokatif. *Jurnal Dakwah*, 15(1), 1-18. DOI: [10.14421/jd.2014.15101](https://doi.org/10.14421/jd.2014.15101)
- McGill, D. (2008). The Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Media. <http://www.mcgillreport.org/buddhamedia>
- Meizita, T. (2014). *Analisis framing pro kontra RUU Ormas di media Suara Pembaruan dan Republika*. [Bachelor's Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah].
- Pacanowsky, M. E., & O'Donnell-Trujillo, N. (1982). Communication and organizational cultures. *Western Journal of Communication (includes Communication Reports)*, 46(2), 115-130. DOI: [10.1080/10570318209374072](https://doi.org/10.1080/10570318209374072)
- Pearson, M., & Senarath, S. (2015). Journalism and ethical conduct. In Gunaratne, S. A., Pearson, M., & Senarath, S. (Eds.). (2015). *Mindful journalism and news ethics in the digital era: A Buddhist approach* (pp. 143-161). New York: Routledge.
- Pintak, L. (2014). Islam, identity, and professional values: A study of journalists in three Muslim-majority regions. *Journalism*, 15(4), 482- 503. DOI: [10.1177/1464884913490269](https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884913490269)
- Powell, K. A. (2011). Framing Islam: An analysis of US media coverage of terrorism since 9/11. *Communication Studies*, 62(1), 90-112. DOI: [10.1080/10510974.2011.533599](https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2011.533599)
- Pratiwi, A. (2018). Konstruksi realitas dan media massa: Analisis framing pemberitaan Lgbt di Republika Dan Bbc News Model Robert N. Entman. *Thaqafiyat: Jurnal Bahasa, Peradaban Dan Informasi Islam*, 19(1), 50-71.
- Saputra, O. (2015). *Representasi budaya humanis dalam program "Jejak Cinta Kasih" di DAAI TV* [Bachelor Thesis, Universitas Tarumanegara].
- Senarath, S. (2015). The journalist and the middle path. In Gunaratne, S. A., Pearson, M., & Senarath, S. (Eds.). (2015). *Mindful journalism and news ethics in the digital era: A Buddhist approach* (pp. 130-142). New York: Routledge.
- Steele, J. (2011). Justice and journalism: Islam and journalistic values in Indonesia and Malaysia. *Journalism*, 12(5), 533-549. DOI: [10.1177/1464884910388234](https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884910388234)
- Steele, J. (2012). Journalism and "The Call to Allah": Teaching Journalism in Indonesia's Islamic Universities and State Institutes. *International Journal of Communication*, 6, 18.
- Steele, J. (2018). *Mediating Islam: Jurnalisme kosmopolitan di negara-negara Muslim Asia Tenggara*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Bentang.
- Susilawati. (2015). *Agama dan media massa: Studi komparatif pemberitaan Charlie Hebdo di SKH Kompas dan Republika*. [Bachelor's Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri

Sunan Kalijaga]

- Suryani, G., & Priyonggo, A. (2015). Tingkat objektivitas VOA-Islam.com terkait aksi penolakan terhadap Ahok. *Dinamika Media dalam Masyarakat Kontemporer Indonesia*, 550-580.
- Susilo, J. Y. (2016). *Objektivitas pemberitaan media online Republika dan Suara Pembaruan terhadap isu pembakaran masjid di Tolikara, Papua: Sebuah analisis isi kuantitatif*. [Bachelor's Thesis, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara].
- Thanissaro, B. (Trans.). (1997). Abhaya Sutta: To Prince Abhaya (On right speech) (MN 58). Access to Insight (Legacy Edition). [www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.058.than.html](http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.058.than.html)
- Tzu Chi. (2014, Januari 20). *DAAI TV Indonesia*. <http://www.tzuchi.or.id/about-misi/daai-tv-indonesia/65>
- Tzu Chi. (n.d.). *Sejarah Tzu Chi*. <http://www.tzuchi.or.id/tentang-kami>
- Underwood, D. (2001). Secularists or modern day prophets? Journalists' ethics and the Judeo-Christian tradition. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 16(1), pp. 33 47. DOI: [10.1207/S15327728JMME1601\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327728JMME1601_4)
- Varley, H. (2012). *The Buddha and his teachings*. Leicestershire: Southwater.
- West, R. & Turner, L. (2010). *Introducing communication theory analysis and application*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

## **Crisis in Indonesian Live Music Industry During Pandemic: Case Analysis of Synchronize Festival 2020**

**Aphrodita Julia Saraswati**

Universitas Indonesia

Email: aphrodita.julia91@ui.ac.id

*Received Jan. 11, 2021; Revised Jun 4, 2021; Accepted Jun. 23, 2021*

### **Abstract**

The global ramifications of Covid-19 are experienced by various sectors, including the live music industry. The sector has become one of many sources of income for the Indonesian creative economy and tourism industry. The live music industry needs to survive while losing half of the significant income streams. This study examined the implementation of crisis response strategy and innovation adaptation done by the promotor of one of the annual music festivals in Indonesia, Synchronize Festival, using Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Diffusion of Innovations as the main framework. The study was conducted using a qualitative approach with case method analysis. Results showed that in handling a crisis, the organiser implemented crisis response strategies. The first one was rebuilding posture, shown through the official statement that includes apology as well as compensation offer. The other strategy was bolstering posture, including reminding, ingratiation, as well as victimage through Synchronize Festival's social media activity. The social media posts consisted of throwbacks to previous event photos, appreciation to all musicians and parties involved, and a reminder that all parties, including the organiser, performers, crew members, and audiences, were victims of the pandemic.

*Keywords: Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), diffusion of innovations, crisis, live music industry, pandemic*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The year 2020 proves how a public health crisis can spread beyond geographic boundaries and be felt across industry sectors on a global scale. In many countries, the government's response to the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic is to establish a lockdown & social distancing policy. This policy created a crisis for many organisations because of the imposed restrictions (Coombs, Holladay, & White, 2020). One of the industrial sub-sectors whose activities have almost completely stopped during the pandemic is the music show industry, part of the creative industry. According to the Indonesian Art Coalition, as of April 2020, there were 234 art events cancelled or



postponed due to the pandemic, including 113 concerts, tours and music festivals (Koalisi Seni, n.d.). In fact, 50% of the industry's main profits are derived from ticket sales from live or offline performances (World Economic Forum, 2020). In Indonesia itself, various music festivals and concerts are one of the drivers of the domestic economy. Music festivals such as Prambanan Jazz, Java Jazz, Synchronize Festival, to the Djakarta Warehouse Project invite hundreds of thousands of spectators every year. Not to mention the thousands of concerts of various genres held all over the country. In 2019, the government received entertainment taxes and income from the creative economy of SGD 10 million (Koran Tempo, 2020). The organisation of music events also contributes significantly to regional income; for example, from the Djakarta Warehouse Project music event held for two days in 2017, the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government received tax revenues of SGD 100,000 (Warta Ekonomi, 2019). In addition, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency (or BPS), in 2015, there were 15.9 million Indonesians who worked in the creative sector. So, it can be interpreted that at least 15.9 million people depend on the creative industry for their lives (Fix Indonesia, 2020). Due to the postponement of art events and activities due to the pandemic, from a financial perspective, creative workers and other arts workers, including stage crews, lighting stylists, sound engineers, curators, and so on, have also lost their primary source of income (Koalisi Seni, 2020).

The Synchronize Festival is one of the hundreds of music events in Indonesia that have been cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic. Synchronize Festival is an annual music festival that features local musicians. This project is the result of a collaboration between local music record label Demajors and promoter Dyandra Promosindo. In addition to music performances, the Synchronize Festival also presents other curations in outdoor cinema, art and merchandise exhibitions, music exhibitions (records), and food and beverage (F&B) tenants. This music festival was first held in 2000 and then held regularly again, starting in 2016 at the Gambir Expo, Kemayoran, Central Jakarta. Every year, Synchronize Fest features more than 100 local musicians across genres and decades, ranging from music from the 70s, 80s, 90s and 2000s (Synchronize Festival, n. d.). From 2016 to 2018, the number of viewers who attended increased by 134 per cent (Kompas.com, 2019). Due to the current pandemic, Synchronize Festival must adapt to the crisis in order to survive financially, while maintaining trust and good relations with potential audiences, performers, production crew, and other parties involved in the event.

Previous studies from a psychological perspective conducted by Messick (2020) indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted music groups, managers, promoters, agencies, and record labels. Musicians report the negative affective and financial impact

of the pandemic. Nevertheless, at the same time, the musicians also get supportive support from their fans. Another study by Brunt & Nelligan (2020) describes the mental health crisis experienced by the music industry in Australia during the pandemic through narratives contained in the media, namely grief and loss, support for creativity and health, adaptation to the new normal, and a picture of the future after the pandemic.

The adaptations and innovations made by the music industry during the Covid-19 pandemic are quite diverse. As revealed by Parsons (2020) in his study, musicians and artists in the UK take advantage of digital platforms to broadcast pre-recorded performances as well as live shows. The same phenomenon was also found by Sahid (2020); more and more musicians and music lovers as consumers are turning to virtual performances during the pandemic. This statement is also supported by Lee (2020) from a study in Korea which shows that many artists and art organisations display their work online by utilising ICT and live streaming. However, Lee's study also mentions the government's support and response in responding to the Covid-19 crisis, one of which is financial support for freelance artists and creators. Hidayatullah's research also presented similar results by describing the discourse that developed in digital media (2021). It was found that artists and more people use digital media to consume music in the pandemic era. However, Hidayatullah's findings are different from the research results in Korea because, through the discourse, it was found that the government paid less attention to music events in Indonesia.

So far, the authors have not found a study that specifically examines the application of crisis communication theory carried out by organisations in the music performance industry sector in dealing with the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on previous studies, the author was particularly interested in investigating the crisis cases experienced by music festival events. The focus of the research was the case experienced by the Synchronize Festival, mainly because the Synchronize Festival was considered successful in holding a music festival during the pandemic (NusaDaily.com, 2020) during hundreds of arts events that were cancelled in 2020 (Koalisi Seni, n.d.). Although in the end, the Synchronize Festival was done with a different concept. One thing that distinguished the Synchronize Festival music event from others was that, while many organisers of similar music events only switched their events to live broadcasts on digital streaming platforms, Synchronize Fest also broadcasted their events on national television. This event is a new form of innovation in the concert industry. Thus, this study aimed to determine the strategy and implementation of crisis management at the crisis event stage carried out by the music performance industry as one of the sectors most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Crisis cases were analysed using the case method, Situational Crisis Communication Theory framework, and Diffusion Theory.

A crisis is defined as an unforeseen and unusual event or series of events that create uncertainty, which poses both a threat and an opportunity to the organisation's primary objectives. Even in cases with apparent signs of crisis, most people still do not expect a crisis to occur. Therefore, crises are almost always unexpected events. Due to its unplanned nature, crises cannot be handled with the usual procedures (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2019).

In categorising the type of crisis, the outbreak of disease that coincides with an economic downturn is an unintentional crisis (Ulmer, Sellnow & Seeger, 2019). These two factors are part of the global crisis many industries experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially by the creative industry in Indonesia. Coombs, Holladay, and White categorise public health crises and industry-wide crises as a type of 'sticky corporate crises.' Meanwhile, Crisis Communication Think Tank, 'sticky crises' is defined as a complex problem and poses a challenge. In an industry-wide crisis, there are two variations, namely 'spillover' and 'intrinsic.' The crisis experienced by Synchronize Festival is an intrinsic variant, and the same crisis is happening in many organisations in similar industries (Jin, Reber & Nowak, 2020).

The crisis at the Synchronize Festival is at the stage of a crisis event. This stage begins with the triggering event that marks the beginning of a crisis. This stage ends when the crisis is considered resolved. When a crisis occurs, managers need to be aware of the current situation and take appropriate action. This phase has two sub-stages, namely (1) crisis recognition and (2) crisis containment. Communication with stakeholders is the most crucial aspect of this phase. Everyone in the organisation needs to be aware of a crisis and respond to it. The crisis recognition stage includes understanding how events are characterised and perceived as crises and gathering crisis-related information. Crisis containment focuses on the organisation's crisis response, including what and how important the initial response is, communication links with reputation management, contingency plans, and follow-up after (Coombs, 2015).

Ideally, an organisation should have a particular crisis management team (CMT). In the crisis recognition stage, CMT begins by understanding the crisis after knowing its existence. CMT is involved in knowledge management, meaning that the team must collect accurate crisis data immediately (Darling, 1994 in Coombs, 2015; Mitchell, 1986 in Coombs, 2015). The CMT team then analyses the information that has been collected to compile knowledge related to the crisis as a basis for controlling decisions and sending messages to various external and internal stakeholders. Without this knowledge, the CMT team cannot make decisions or take action to remedy the effects of the crisis. One of the

actions that can be taken is to provide statements to the media because the media usually puts the most pressure on organisations to obtain crisis information.

In addition, CMT members should also be aware of issues related to gathering information, constructing crisis knowledge, and managing that knowledge. There are three variations of crisis dimensions, including (1) perceived salience, (2) immediacy, and (3) uncertainty. Perceived salience relates to the assessment of a crisis on its impact and probability. If the organisation does not take action, the impact can spread to other areas, surrounding communities, and other stakeholders. This varies, depending on the value of the loss and the possibility of loss. The greater the value of the loss and the possibility of loss, the higher the level of perceived salience in the eyes of management (Billings et al., 1980; Dutton, 1986 in Coombs, 2015). Immediacy refers to the time associated with a crisis. Time pressure has two components: (1) how quickly the crisis will strike and (2) the degree of pressure on stakeholders to take action. The sooner the crisis can cause losses, the greater the level of immediacy. Uncertainty (uncertainty) is how much ambiguity associated with a problem—the greater the ambiguity surrounding the crisis, the greater the uncertainty. People are interested in and need to reduce uncertainty (Coombs, 2015).

Coombs developed situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) in 1993. SCCT is built based on attribution theory. Therefore, SCCT is cognitive, that is, how people perceive a crisis. SCCT focuses on how organisations use communication to manage crises, making it organisation-centric. However, SCCT does not focus on the organisation as the sender of the message but on how stakeholders as the recipient of the message perceive and perceive the crisis situation. Crisis communicators need to consider the potential losses that a crisis situation can cause and choose the most optimal crisis response according to the anticipated losses (Coombs, 2020). One of the stages in SCCT is to determine a crisis response strategy. As it is known that communication has both verbal and nonverbal aspects, crisis response strategies also involve words (verbal aspects) and actions (nonverbal aspects) that are directed by organisations to deal with crises. A crisis response strategy is carried out by determining the intent of the strategy, whether it is to change perceptions about a crisis or an organisation in crisis (Coombs, 2015).

The crisis response strategy in SCCT is divided into four postures or communication approaches, including denial, diminishment, rebuilding, and bolstering. The analysis in the Synchronize Fest case will focus more on the rebuilding and bolstering approach. The rebuilding posture, along with denial and diminishment, describes the level of accommodation, i.e. how much attention is shown through the response to the victims. This reflects how far the organisation is considered responsible for a crisis. Rebuilding posture seeks to improve the reputation of the organisation. The messages conveyed and

the actions taken by the organisation are adjusted to benefit stakeholders and offset the crisis's adverse effects. Rebuilding posture includes strategies in the form of compensation and apology.

First, the compensation given can be in the form of money or other gifts to the victims. Second, in an apology, organisations need to publicly state that they are fully responsible for the crisis and offer an apology to the victims. Coombs further provides guidance on using crisis response strategies based on assets, liabilities, and the most appropriate situation. When the organisation compensates, it indicates that the organisation is taking responsibility for the crisis. This strategy can be applied to any crisis that causes casualties. If the organisation makes an apology, it shows that the organisation accepts responsibility for the crisis. This strategy can be applied to any crisis, proving that the organisation is the leading cause of the crisis. This compensation and apology both have the potential to increase the costs that the organisation must incur. In addition to the rebuilding posture, there is another additional strategy, namely bolstering. This posture focuses on providing positive information about organisations in crisis. The strategy includes reminding (reminding stakeholders of past good achievements), ingratiation (giving praise to stakeholders), and victimage (explaining that the organisation is a victim of the crisis). Organisations can do more than one combination of crisis strategies (Coombs, 2015).

Diffusion Theory, or also called the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, was developed by Rogers in 1962. This theory explains how the process of innovation or technology is adopted in social systems (Rogers, 2003). In an organisational context, this theory looks at how new procedures, practices, or objects are adopted and accepted by companies and individuals. Diffusion theory consists of five stages of the process, namely awareness (the agency or organisation is exposed to an idea), interest (the organisation develops an interest in the idea), evaluation (determines and considers the pros and cons), trial (trying to implement the idea to determine its effectiveness), and finally adoption or failure to adopt (acceptance or rejection of ideas, changes, or innovations).

Whether or not an innovation is adopted depends on three variables: the past, the decision-makers, and the innovation or change itself. Past considerations mean revisiting problems and needs that arose in the past. In essence, it is necessary to understand where the organisation was before making a decision to make changes and make progress. Decision-makers also play a role in the diffusion of innovation. For example, what characteristics make a decision maker open or closed to change? Is there a closed-minded group that wields significant influence over others? How do experience, age, education, and other socioeconomic variables affect the decision-making process? Does

the decision-maker consist entirely of leaders and no followers? The last variable is the innovation change itself. Does the innovation outweigh current practices or procedures? Does the innovation require drastic change, or can it be easily assimilated into current habits? In addition to these three important variables, change agents, who are usually communicators and public relations experts, seek to encourage agencies or organisations to adopt innovation processes, for example utilising mass media at the awareness and interest stages (Fearn-Banks, 2017).

Research Question 1: Are the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival responsive in recognising potential crises?

Research Question 2: Is the crisis response strategy implemented by the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival accurate?

Research Question 3: Are the innovations carried out by Synchronize Fest 2020 to adapt to crisis situations appropriate?

## **METHOD**

To answer this research question, the author used a qualitative approach. One of the characteristics of a qualitative approach is that it explores a problem and develops a detailed understanding of the phenomena (Cresswell, 2012). The author used secondary data from news articles in the media as well as information listed on websites and official social media to analyse cases. In analysing secondary data, researchers used data collected by others to answer research questions. Many social researchers use news reports as a data source, not only to analyse article content but also as a way to identify key events (Neuman, 2014).

The analytical method chosen was the case study. In the case study, the selected case is a picture of the real business situation. The management process carried out in the case method is considered a skill, not a set of techniques or concepts (Shapiro, 1984). The case study begins with reading a case, questioning the case, seeking information relevant to the question, making calculations, and finally forming an opinion or conclusion on the central problem (Ellet, 2018). The model case method used in this research were five stages of the Model for Effective Case Analysis which is intended for the case study analysis process in general management and strategic management courses (Friga, 2005).

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

*Framing.* The questions discussed in the analysis of this crisis case include: a) Are the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival responsive in recognising potential crises? b) Is the crisis response strategy carried out by the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival accurate? c) Are the innovations made by Synchronize Fest 2020 to adapt to crisis situations appropriate?

*Flipping and Skimming.* This stage identifies the general picture of the case before entering in more detail the description of the beginning of the case and the ending of the case. According to the crisis type category by Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2019), the crisis case experienced by the Synchronize Festival 2020 was an unintentional crisis, where there was an outbreak of disease and the economic downturn that followed. In responding to the crisis, based on the SCCT theoretical framework by Coombs (2015), the management carried out rebuilding and bolstering postures. As for adapting to crisis situations, the organisers carry out a process of Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers (2003).

*Beginning of Case.* On 24 December 2019, the organisers of the Synchronize Festival officially announced the date of the event, namely on October 2, 3, and 4, 2020 (Synchronize Festival, 2019). In the same month, it was discovered that the Covid-19 outbreak broke out in Wuhan, China. However, this condition is not considered a potential crisis by the event organisers, as evidenced by the decision to market early bird tickets in early 2020 (Synchronize Festival, 2019). The organisers then continued the sale of pre-sale tickets in February and April 2020 and student card category tickets in May 2020, although it was later announced that the first case of Covid-19 in Indonesia was on 2 March 2020. On 10 April, the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government set a policy Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) through Pergub 33 of 2020. Several public facilities were closed, transportation restrictions were imposed and only allowed 11 sectors to operate during the PSBB, excluding the music industry (CNN Indonesia, 2020). At the beginning of the year, the organisers were optimistic about ticket sales. Although no line-up of performing artists has been announced, in the period January to May 2020, 36,000 tickets for the three-day show have been sold out (Infopensi, 2020). However, this sales figure did not reach the overall visitor target as in previous years, which reached more than 50,000 people. After the ticket sales phase, the Synchronize Festival did not provide any statement regarding the continuity of the event in October 2020. In fact, social media activities on their official accounts are still running as usual. Because there is no clarity on the continuation of the event from the organisers, the official Synchronize Festival's social media, especially Instagram @synchronizefest, began to be flooded with comments with negative sentiments.

Based on media reporting data compiled by the author, the organisers have considered an alternative to organising the event. According to Hendra Noor Saleh as President



Director of Dyandra Promosindo, the Synchronize Festival event can be a paid digital show, where the performers still appear but are broadcast digitally. He also stated that there was an option to be broadcast on national television channels. In addition, he admitted that after the technical team went to the field to carry out measurements and simulations of the Gambir Expo, it was found that the health protocol was impossible to fulfil due to capacity considerations. Finally, his party is also considering moving the venue for the event to a larger location, namely at the GBK Stadium, so it does not violate the rules and health protocols for physical distancing (Akurat.co, 2020). In line with what Hendra said, Kiki Aulia, as Head of Production at Demajors, stated that the Synchronize Festival event could be held virtually but would be the last option. Kiki regrets if this event is packaged in a virtual form because it will change the audience's sensation while enjoying the concert. When the news was published in July 2020, his party was in discussion with the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf) and other related parties regarding the protocol for organising the event. The organisers prepare a scenario for the event by recording the health conditions of ticket buyers in detail to ensure the safety of the event. Kiki explained, on the H-1 of the event, data will be collected on conditions, body temperature, including visitor activities and mobility (Okaycelebrity, 2020). In addition to preparing scenarios, another concrete action taken by the organisers of the Synchronize Festival to respond to the crisis is to take the initiative to raise funds for the 'Joint Movement.' In the context of solidarity among fellow creative workers, the Synchronize Festival initiated a program in the form of donations of basic food packages, which were distributed directly to freelancers behind the scenes such as crew and stage technicians, lighting, sound systems and others affected by Covid-19. The funds that were successfully collected were SGD 1600 (Synchronize Festival, 2020).

*Ending of Case.* On 6 September 2020, about one month before the event took place, the organisers issued an official statement entitled "*A Love Letter to All of You*" containing an apology and a statement of official cancellation. In the statement, spectators who have purchased tickets must confirm by being given two options, namely refund and non-refund, where ticket buyers can choose to refund or keep tickets that will still be valid for the next show in 2021 (Synchronize Festival, 2020). Those who choose the non-refund option will receive special merchandise from the Synchronize Festival, a T-shirt. It turned out that 70% of the Synchronize Fest 2020 ticket buyers chose the non-refund option, meaning that the audience's enthusiasm was very high; thus, they chose to wait for the show next year (Infopensi, 2020). During the period of confirmation of purchase and submission of ticket refunds, the Synchronize Festival actively answers questions that come in through the comments column or direct messages on social media related to technical and other information.



After releasing the official statement, the organisers announced that the Synchronize Festival 2020 will still exist, but in a different format than before, namely broadcasting on air on national television stations and streaming digital platforms titled "*Celebration with Television*" on 14 November 2020 with a full 3-hour duration. There are many aspects of organising this event, including the production staff, who have to condense the three-day agenda into a shorter schedule. The performers who in previous years were placed to perform on five separate stages at this event had to share one stage. The most notable is that the music performances are run without the audience in the studio. In preparation for this show, the organisers ensured that they carried out health protocols for all crew members and parties involved, including disinfecting and medical personnel to conduct rapid tests, measure body temperature, and conduct 3M (Synchronize Festival 2020). Recently, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, in collaboration with APMI as an association, which is also a member of Synchronize Fest representatives, released a guide for implementing event activities in accordance with the adaptation of new habits called CHSE. This guide covers implementing hygiene, health, safety, and environmental sustainability protocols (Medcom, 2020).

### Labelling

The general environmental condition analysis is based on the seven general environmental segment guidelines. The purpose of analysing these trends is to be able to predict the segments that have the most significant influence on the company in the next few years, as well as to explain the considerations of the predictions made (Hitt, Ireland, & Hoskisson, 2017). Here is a general analysis of the Synchronize Festival 2020 environment:

1. Technological trends: For many organisations, technological developments and digitisation provide many conveniences and new opportunities for creativity and challenges. During the new normal or adaptation of new habits, many event organisers worldwide use digital platforms to hold virtual concerts, including concerts of top pop musicians (Billboard, 2020). The trend of increasing use of digital channels, including social media, is also used by many organisations in conducting two-way communication with stakeholders. Social media is a very useful tool for monitoring crises. Nonetheless, the cyber world is unpredictable. Organisations cannot ignore online comments and complaints and need to have a contingency plan to manage problems that arise on social media (Kaur, 2015).
2. Demographic trends: Indonesia is currently experiencing a demographic bonus expected to end in 2045. According to the Central Statistics Agency, Indonesia's

productive population (aged 15 to 64 years) is projected to be 179.1 million people in 2020, and the millennial generation (aged 21- 36) numbered about 63.5 million people. This makes the millennial generation a driving force for Indonesia's significant economic growth (IDN Research Institute, 2020).

3. Economic trends: Based on the World Bank report, at the end of 2020, Indonesia experienced a recession for the first time in the last two decades. The 2020 economic growth projection was revised from -2.2% to -1.6% in September. The unemployment rate rose 1.8%, and the disguised unemployment rate increased 3.8% in the third quarter compared to a year earlier. The Indonesian economy is expected to start improving again in 2021 and slowly strengthen in 2022, but the pace of recovery is not uniform across sectors. Sectors that are physically contact intensive will take longer to recover than those that are not. The downside scenario is that growth could decline to 3.1% in 2021 and 3.8% in 2022 if Indonesia's mobility and social restrictions are tightened, accompanied by weak global growth (The World Bank, 2020).
4. Political/legal trends: The creative economy and tourism industries in Indonesia, in particular, are given more attention by the government because tourism development plans were forced to stop due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In mid-2020, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economic encouraged local music promoters to form the Association of Indonesian Music Promoters (APMI) to communicate and exchange ideas to resolve various emerging issues. Cooperation between the government and industry regarding the development of music events is expected to increase foreign and domestic tourists' visits and movements (VOI, 2020). Later, in October 2020, APMI was officially formed by seven major Indonesian music promoters. David Karto represents Synchronize Festival as one of the principal founders (Tirto.id, 2020).
5. Sociocultural trend: Demographic movements in the society trigger intergenerations differences in terms of social and cultural. For instance, from the perspective of consumption pattern, earlier research indicates younger people tend to allocate more budget for telecommunication and leisure. Gen Z spend more than 21.3 percent of their total spending in a month only for telecommunication and leisure. This figure is higher than millennials spending at 19.1% and Gen X at 16.9% (Alvara Strategic, 2020). Other data compares the spending of the millennials to baby boomers. The data indicates millennials generation spend 26% of their money for entertainment (theater, concert, party),

of which such financial allocation could not be found among baby boomers *boomers* (Tirto.id, 2017).

6. Global Trend: Generally, music performance market is projected to grow by 10.66 billion dollar within the period of 2020-2024, with compound annual growth rate (CAGR) at 9%. This market growth is boost by the increasing popularity of live music events, the increasing purchasing power of the society to buy event expensive tickets, and the high internet and mobile device penetration. The growth of online ticket sales become one of the main reasons that boost musical performance market growth for some years ahead (Research and Market, 2020). Specifically, there are innovations to stage concerts in many places during the pandemic era. For instance, a concert organizer in UK set the distance by grouping the audience to up to five on their private viewing platforms (CNN Travel, 2020). In Denmark, a music event was carried out in drive-in concept, in which the spectators remained in the car (TimeOut, 2020).
7. Environmental Trend: Health and research study initiated by Tetrapak in 2019 shows that 63% of the society consider environmental issue as the most worrying problem globally. The main issue was global warming. The study also finds that the society's increasing awareness of waste problems, particularly about plastic waste impact to the marine life. A respondent from Indonesia mentioned the effect of industrialization and development that rapidly causes negative environmental effect. The study mentions two out of three persons believe that human beings are heading to total environmental destruction if they cannot change their behavior (Tetra Pak, 2019).

*Industry.* The music industry and the performance industry are part of the 16 sub-sectors of the creative economy according to the categorisation of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. According to the World Economic Forum, the global music industry has two main profit lines. The first is through live or offline shows that generate 50% of the total profit and come from ticket sales. While the second is from recording, which includes revenue from streaming, digital downloads, physical album sales, and sync revenue (music licenses for games, TV, and commercials) (World Economic Forum, 2020). During the pandemic, the local music industry can rely on other business units such as digital assets and merchandise by using new concepts to survive (Whiteboard Journal, 2020).

*Competition.* Competitors owned by Demajors and Dyandra Promosindo are music promoters and other event organisers on a large scale. One of its biggest competitors is

Ismaya Live. Ismaya Live is part of the live event division of the lifestyle company Ismaya Group, which annually presents music festivals with local and foreign performers with a number of visitors in the tens of thousands, including the Djakarta Warehouse Project (Jakarta), We The Fest (Jakarta), Time Machine Festival (Jakarta), and Sunny Side Up Festival (Bali) (Ismaya Live, nd).

*Strength.* The concept of a cross-genre and cross-decade event with the appearance of local musicians owned by Synchronize Festival makes it one of the music events that invites quite a lot of interest from visitors, as evidenced by the 134% increase in the number of visitors during the three events, namely 2016-2018. Starting from 22,000 visitors in 2016, it rose to 47,000 visitors in 2017 and again rose to 53,000 visitors in 2018. Meanwhile, the number of musicians invited to perform to enliven this music festival also grows from year to year, starting from 101 performers in 2016, increasing to 104 in the following year. Furthermore, in 2018 the organisers invited 118 performers, and in 2019 presented 131 performers (Kompas.com, 2019). The target market for Synchronize Fest has been established since 2016. Generation Y and Z dominated the audience, but Generation X also made up 20% of the total audience. In addition to the high enthusiasm of the young audience, every year, Synchronize Fest carries a different event concept. Since 2019, Synchronize Fest has been committed to environmental sustainability with a green movement campaign. Visitors are advised to come using public transportation. In addition, the organisers also provide a meeting point for cycling together to the venue for the event. The organisers provide a water station and advise visitors to bring their own drinking bottles and refill water at the event location. This event also strives to consistently use electricity instead of generators or diesel engines by cooperating with the electric company. This effort is carried out to reduce the volume of waste, especially plastic produced by the Synchronize Fest and reduce the impact of global warming (Kompas.com, 2019). The initial planning for this 2020 event still carries the same environmentally friendly concept (Synchronize Festival, 2020). However, due to changes in the concept of the event to adapt to the pandemic situation, the plan has not been able to be implemented.

*Weaknesses.* Weaknesses found in the situation and conditions of the Synchronize Festival event are as follows:

1. The difficulty of adapting the whole concept of the event into the virtual realm. In terms of the experience felt by visitors, of course, it will be very different from events that are held directly.

2. There is a long lag time from the beginning of the pandemic crisis to the announcement of an official statement by the organisers so that it affects the negative sentiment received by the Synchronize Festival on social media by potential visitors who have already purchased tickets.
3. The impact of the change in the concept of the event was condensed in one day, among others, because the organisers collaborated a lot with freelancers, so some experienced contract terminations and lost sources of income during the pandemic, so that from an economic perspective, they contributed to increasing the unemployment rate.

*External.* In general, the ongoing trend positions Demajors and Dyandra Promosindo as organisers of the Synchronize Festival event in a position that tends to be safe for the next few years, especially in terms of demographic, sociocultural, and environmental trends, even though the economy is still recovering. In terms of industry, music show organisers have to lose 50% of their primary income source, namely ticket sales but can rely on digital assets and merchandise. In terms of competition, Synchronize Festival must compete with music promoters and large-scale event organisers, especially Ismaya Live.

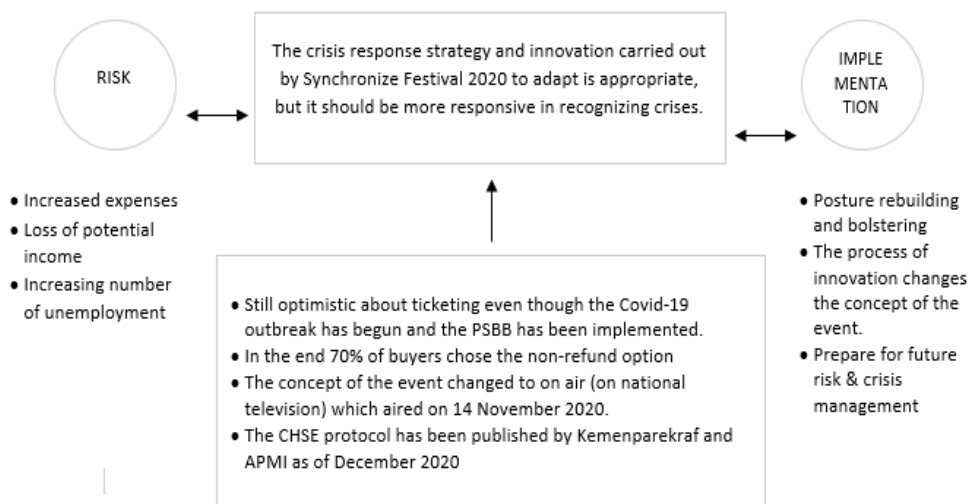
*Internals.* The point of excellence that Synchronize Festival has is the concept of the event that puts forward local musicians across genres and generations to attract a fairly broad target market and bring high enthusiasm from visitors every year. In addition, there are consistent efforts in realising the concept of an environmentally friendly event to become a plus point that is in accordance with global environmental issues. Weak points include the difficulty in adapting the event to the virtual realm, and there is a long lag for management to issue an official statement on cancelling the event, thus contributing to the loss of creative workers' jobs.

The main question that will be answered in this synthesis process is to find out whether the implementation of the management decisions and the organisers of the Synchronize Festival 2020 event is appropriate and appropriate.

Table 1. *Case synthesis*

Question	Option/ hypothesis	Decision criteria	Pros	Cons
Are the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival responsive in recognising potential crises?	No	<i>Crisis recognition</i>	-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The uncertainty of the continuity of the event for months</li> <li>2. The public has lost trust in the organisers</li> </ol>
Is the crisis response strategy carried out by the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival accurate?	Yes	Organisational reputation	Maintaining trust and reputation in the public	Increase company expenses
Are the innovations made by Synchronize Festival 2020 to adapt to crisis situations appropriate?	Yes	Health risk, financial risk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Potential to attract new audiences</li> <li>2. Minimise health risks</li> <li>3. Comply with government regulations</li> <li>4. Potential to become a new event concept in the future</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A different experience, unlike the typical event concept</li> <li>2. Loss of potential income</li> <li>3. Still under contract with sponsors, performers, vendors, etc.</li> <li>4. Contribute to the increase in the unemployment rate</li> </ol>

Figure 1. Concluding



In the early stages of a crisis, namely recognising a crisis (crisis recognition) in a crisis event based on Coombs (2015), the organisers of the Synchronize Festival 2020, the organisers proved to be unresponsive in recognising potential crises, as previously explained at the beginning of case stage. Even though the outbreak case was announced in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019, the organisers were still optimistic about announcing the date for the festival event in October 2020. Furthermore, the organisers were still optimistic about opening three phases of ticket sales from January to May 2020, ignoring that cases Covid-19 has entered Indonesia in early March 2020, followed by implementing the Jakarta PSBB for the first time in April 2020. Thirty-six thousand tickets have already been sold, and due to the uncertainty of the continuity of the event for months, ticket buyers have expressed negative comments delivered via social media.

The crisis response strategy carried out by the organisers of the Synchronize Festival 2020 based on the SCCT theory, according to Coombs (2015), are as follows:

**Rebuilding posture:** The official statement "*A Love Letter to All of You*" released by the organisers in September 2020 is a form of rebuilding posture containing an apology (apology) because the event must be cancelled and offers compensation (compensation) for those who have purchased tickets through refund options or provide merchandise for those who choose not to refund. According to Coombs (2015), this is done to improve the organisation's reputation because the message conveyed is designed to benefit stakeholders and offset the negative impact of the crisis. Even though it increases costs for the organisation, the event organisers show stakeholders that they are ready to take responsibility for the crisis by adopting this posture. The chosen strategy brought positive

results because 70% of ticket buyers, or about 25,000 people, saved tickets for use next year.

**Rebolstering posture:** Social media activities carried out by the Synchronize Festival 2020 show the rebolstering posture as a crisis response strategy. Reminding: On its official Instagram and YouTube, Synchronize Festival posts videos of performances by musicians from previous years as a 'throwback' to evoke positive emotions and memories from the audience of past successes. Ingratiation: Praise was conveyed by Synchronize Festival to stakeholders, namely local musicians who filled the event and appreciation of creative workers behind the scenes affected by the Covid-19 pandemic through fundraising initiatives, also commending audiences who support the government to comply with health protocols. Victimage: Through a series of posts on their social media, the Synchronize Festival explained that they and all potential audience members were victims of the crisis. Therefore, they also broadcast public service messages from the 3M Movement (Washing Hands, Using Masks, Maintaining Distance) and encouraging the public to make lifestyle changes by adapting new habits (Infopensi, 2020).

The organisers make several innovations of the 2020 Synchronize Festival in adapting to crises, including 1) changing the concept of the event from an offline music show for three days to an event that airs on air on television, 2) collaborating with APMI and Kemenparekraf to compile guidelines for implementing event activities that are in accordance with the adaptation of new habits, and 3) conducting fundraising initiatives for creative workers affected by Covid-19. The stages of Diffusion of Innovations carried out by the organisers of the 2020 Synchronize Festival are as follows:

Table 2. Stages of Diffusion of Innovations

The stages of the diffusion of innovation (Fearn-Banks, 2017)	Actions taken by the organiser
<i>Awareness</i>	Through interviews with several media, representatives of Demajors, Kiki Aulia, and representatives of Dyandra Promosindo, Hendra Noor Saleh, showed that there was awareness of the possibility of holding events virtually. However, it would be the last option after the option of continuing to hold events with adaptations of new habits.
<i>Interest</i>	Meeting with various relevant parties in the government, including the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and the COVID-19 Task Force to discuss the possibility of holding the event.
<i>Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two ideas under consideration are to expand the festival venue to reduce the number of spectators by 30% from normal capacity. Another consideration is to move the</li> </ul>



	<p>venue to one with an audience capacity of only 30%, and all spectators must sit in the stands throughout the show.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After observing the situation and developing the pandemic curve that has not yet been sloping in Jakarta, the Synchronize Festival Committee has finally decided not to involve the audience in this year's event directly.</li> </ul>
<i>Trial</i>	Not conducting trials.
<i>Adoption/ failure to adopt</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully adopting innovation by broadcasting programs from Indonesian national television stations, with the aim that viewers can enjoy the program without having to leave the house while still complying with government recommendations regarding health protocols. In addition, shows can be accessed simultaneously through applications and streaming video channels.</li> <li>• Become one of the parties in preparing guidelines for the implementation of events in accordance with the adaptation of new habits (CHSE protocol).</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis of crisis cases conducted on the Synchronize Festival 2020 show that the crisis response strategy carried out by the Synchronize Festival is following the SCCT theory from Coombs (2015), namely rebuilding posture in the form of an apology and compensation and bolstering posture in the form of reminding, ingratiation, and victimage. In rebuilding the posture, the event organisers conveyed an official statement via social media to the stakeholders, especially potential viewers, that the official event was cancelled. The statement also made an apology (apology) and provided compensation options to ticket buyers in the form of refunds and merchandise offers. Another strategy carried out by the Synchronize Festival is in the form of bolstering posture, which is mainly shown through postings on social media. The Synchronize Festival does a reminder to positively affect the emotions of the audience, namely by uploading documentation of the excitement of successful events in previous years.

Furthermore, in bolstering posture, the Synchronize Festival also carried out ingratiation or appreciation for the contributions and hard work made by all parties involved in the event even though it was hindered by the pandemic, including efforts to implement health protocols. This appreciation was also carried out in the form of fundraising for the affected workers. Finally, the Synchronize Festival also conveyed that all parties involved in front and backstage were victims of the pandemic.

Despite increasing the expense, the strategy adopted has a positive impact because ticket buyers maintain confidence in the Synchronize Festival. In adapting to crisis situations, the Synchronize Festival implements five stages of Diffusion of Innovations by Fearn-Banks (2017) in the form of awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. This innovation has the potential to attract new audiences, minimise health risks and comply with government regulations, and has the potential to become a new event concept in the following years. On the other hand, this decision risks making the event not optimal, losing income, and increasing the number of unemployed. However, the Synchronize Festival should be more responsive at the crisis recognition stage to reduce negative sentiments that arise because the event has already been announced and tickets have already been sold.

As the data used in this study was limited to secondary data, the analysis carried out does not include a description of the statement from the management internally. This study does not discuss the pre-crisis and post-crisis stages, which can further enrich insight into the creative industry's handling of crises more thoroughly in dealing with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## REFERENCES

- Aditia, A. (2019, October 3). Synchronize Fest 2019, Festival Musik dengan Gerakan Ramah Lingkungan. *Kompas.com*. <https://entertainment.kompas.com/read/2019/10/03/160000410/synchronize-fest-2019-festival-musik-dengan-gerakan-ramah-lingkungan?page=all>
- Aditia, A. (2019, October 10). Berbagi Kebaikan dan Menyatukan Keberagaman di Synchronize Fest 2019. *Kompas.com*. <https://entertainment.kompas.com/read/2019/10/10/130200510/berbagi-kebaikan-dan-menyatukan-keberagaman-di-synchronize-fest-2019?page=4>.
- Alimi, A. S. (2020, October 16). Masa Berkabut Industri Musik. *Koran Tempo*. <https://koran.tempo.co/read/opini/458877/opini-masa-berkabut-industri-musik-oleh-anas-syahrul-alimi?read=true>
- Alvara Strategic. (2020). *Indonesia Gen Z And Millennial Report 2020*. <http://alvara-strategic.com/indonesia-gen-z-and-millennial-report-2020/>
- Bagus, E. (2020, July 18). Terjual 12 Ribu Tiket, Synchronize Fest 2020 Kemungkinan Digelar Secara Online. *Akurat.co*. <https://akurat.co/hiburan/id-1168517-read-terjual-12-ribu-tiket-synchronize-fest-2020-kemungkinan-digelar-secara-online>
- Brunt, S., & Nelligan, K. (2020). The Australian music industry's mental health crisis: media narratives during the coronavirus pandemic. *Media International Australia*, 178(1), 42–46. doi:10.1177/1329878x20948957
- Coombs, W. T. (2015). *Ongoing crisis communication: planning, managing, and responding* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Coombs, W. T. (2020). Situational crisis communication theory: Influences, provenance, evolution, and prospects. In F. Frandsen & W. Johansen (Eds.), *Crisis Communication* (pp. 121-140). Walter de Gruyter Inc.
- Coombs, W. T., Holladay, S. J., & White, R. (2020). Corporate Crises: Sticky Crises and Corporations. In Y. Jin, B. H. Reber, & G. J. Nowak (Eds.), *Advancing Crisis Communication Effectiveness: Integrating Public Relations Scholarship with Practice*. Routledge.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (4th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Cuma dari Bisnis Hiburan Musik, Jakarta Kantongi Rp10 M. (2019, December 13). *Warta Ekonomi*. <https://www.wartaekonomi.co.id/read261528/cuma-dari-bisnis-hiburan-musik-jakarta-kantongi-rp10-m/1>
- Debora, Y. (2017, 7 September). *Work Hard, Play Harder!* [Infographic]. Tirto.id. <https://tirto.id/ke-mana-mengalirnya-uang-para-milenial-cv76>
- Ellet, W. (2018). *The Case Study Handbook: A Student's Guide*. Harvard Business Review Press.

- Fearn-Banks, K. (2017). *Crisis Communications: A Casebook Approach* (5th ed.). Routledge.
- Friga, P. N. (2005). *Navigating the Case Analysis: Process for Strategic Management* [PowerPoint slides]. Iowa State University. [https://instr.iastate.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=18755900](https://instr.iastate.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=18755900)
- Gumay, H. (2020, March 30). Seni (Harus) Tetap Hidup Melawan Pandemi. *Koalisi Seni*. <https://koalisiseni.or.id/seni-harus-tetap-hidup-melawan-pandemi/>
- Hall, S. (2020, 27 May). This is how COVID-19 is affecting the music industry. *World Economic Forum*. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/this-is-how-covid-19-is-affecting-the-music-industry/>
- Here Are All the Livestreams & Virtual Concerts to Watch During Coronavirus Crisis (Updating). (2020, 16 December). *Billboard*. <https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/pop/9335531/coronavirus-quarantine-music-events-online-streams>
- Hidayatullah, R. (2021). Music Performance Policy during Covid-19 Crisis: Expectations Versus Reality. *Journal of Advance in Social Sciences and Policy (JASSP)*, 1(1), 1-8. <http://repository.lppm.unila.ac.id/30153/2/Hidayatullah%20-%20Music%20Performance%20Policy%20during%20Covid-19%20Crisis%20E.pdf>
- Hitt, M. A., Ireland, R. D., & Hoskisson, R. E. (2017). *Strategic Management: Competitiveness & Globalization: Concepts and Cases*, 12e. Cengage Learning.
- IDN Research Institute. (2020). *Indonesia Millennial Report 2020*. <https://cdn.idntimes.com/content-documents/Indonesia-millennial-report-2020-by-IDN-Research-Institute.pdf>
- Ismaya Live. (n.d.). *About Us*. <https://www.ismayalive.com/about>
- Jin, Y., Reber B. H., & Nowak, G. J. (2020). *Advancing Crisis Communication Effectiveness: Integrating Public Relations Scholarship with Practice*. Routledge
- Kaur, K. (2015). Corporate responses to a racially framed incident in Malaysia. In M. Sheehan & D. Quinn-Allan. (Eds.), *Crisis Communication in a Digital World*. Cambridge University Press.
- Koalisi Seni. (n.d.). *Advokasi: Seni Semasa Krisis*. <https://koalisiseni.or.id/advokasi/seni-semasa-krisis/>
- Lee, S. (2020). A Study on the Cultural and Creative Industry in the COVID-19 Era. *The Journal of the Convergence on Culture Technology*, 6(4), 567–573. <https://doi.org/10.17703/JCCT.2020.6.4.567>
- Manning, J. (2020, 13 May). Denmark's drive-in concerts could be the future of live music. *Time Out*. <https://www.timeout.com/news/denmarks-drive-in-concerts-could-be-the-future-of-live-music-051320>

- Messick, K. J. (2020, 15 June). Music industry in crisis: The impact of a novel coronavirus on touring metal bands, promoters, and venues. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/96ptk>
- MH, Anindya. (2020, June 6). Industri Hiburan Kreatif Di Tengah Pandemi. *Fix Indonesia*. <https://fixindonesia.pikiran-rakyat.com/seni-budaya/pr-36571803/industri-hiburan-kreatif-di-tengah-pandemi>
- Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (7th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.
- Parsons, C. (2020). Music and the internet in the age of COVID-19, *Early Music*, 48(3), 403–405, <https://doi.org/10.1093/em/caaa045>
- Perjalanan PSBB Jakarta Hingga Kembali ke Titik Nol. (2020, September 11). *CNN Indonesia*. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20200911061829-20-545178/perjalanan-psbb-jakarta-hingga-kembali-ke-titik-nol>
- Promotor Diminta Bentuk Asosiasi demi Mendukung Perkembangan Event Musik di Indonesia (2020, July 22). *VOI*. <https://voi.id/berita/9208/promotor-diminta-bentuk-asosiasi-demi-mendukung-perkembangan-i-event-i-musik-di-indonesia>
- Research and Markets. (March 2020). *Global Live Music Market 2020-2024*. [https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5011375/global-live-music-market-2020-2024?utm\\_source=dynamic&utm\\_medium=GNOM&utm\\_code=rz7v6q&utm\\_campaign=1403402+-+Insights+on+the+Worldwide+Live+Music+Industry+to+2024+-+Drivers%2c+Challenges%2c+and+Trends&utm\\_exec=jamu273gnomd](https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/5011375/global-live-music-market-2020-2024?utm_source=dynamic&utm_medium=GNOM&utm_code=rz7v6q&utm_campaign=1403402+-+Insights+on+the+Worldwide+Live+Music+Industry+to+2024+-+Drivers%2c+Challenges%2c+and+Trends&utm_exec=jamu273gnomd)
- Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). Free Press.
- Sabrina, G. (2020, 17 March). Nasib Hidup Festival Musik di Tengah Pandemi COVID-19. *Whiteboard Journal*. <https://www.whiteboardjournal.com/ideas/music/nasib-hidup-festival-musik-di-tengah-pandemi-covid-19/>
- Sahid, S. (2020). What Coronavirus Has Done to Music Industry and How They Overcome It. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3590920>
- Shapiro, B. (1984). *An Introduction to Cases* [Course notes]. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- Sosialisasi dan Simulasi Panduan Pelaksanaan Event C.H.S.E. Experience Digelar di Jakarta. (2020, December 10). *Medcom*. <https://www.medcom.id/hiburan/musik/Wb7x0oMk-sosialisasi-dan-simulasi-panduan-pelaksanaan-event-c-h-s-e-experience-digelar-di-jakarta>
- Susanto, G. (2020, December 20). 5 Pertunjukan Musik yang Tetap Berjalan Selama Pandemi COVID-19. *NusaDaily.com*. <https://nusadaily.com/entertainment/5-pertunjukan-musik-yang-tetap-berjalan-selama-pandemi-covid-19.html/3>

Synchronize Festival. (n.d.). *About*. <https://synchronizefestival.com/About>

Synchronize Festival 2020 “Selebrasi Bersama Televisi”. (2020, October 19). *Infopensi*. <http://infopensi.com/synchronize-festival-2020-selebrasi-bersama-televisi>

Synchronize Festival [@synchronizefest]. (2019, December 24). *Catat tanggalnya, dan nantikan informasi spesial di tahun baru! #SynchronizeFest20 It's not just a festival, it's a movement #SynchronizeFest* [Photograph]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/B6cZ0bkAEGw/>

Synchronize Festival [@synchronizefest]. (2019, December 26). *Siapkan dirimu! Penjualan tiket #SynchronizeFest20 akan dijual tepat pada tanggal 1 Januari 2020 pukul 00:00 WIB di website [www.synchronizefestival.com](http://www.synchronizefestival.com) note: Early* [Photograph]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/B6hljISgVdN/>

Synchronize Festival [@synchronizefest]. (2020, February 17). *Kondisi lingkungan adalah refleksi dari apa yang dilakukan oleh manusianya sendiri, baik secara individu maupun secara kolektif. Atas dasar urgensi* [Photograph]. <https://www.instagram.com/p/B8qsWSdAzc5/>

Synchronize Festival [@synchronizefest]. (2020, June 4). *Terima kasih yang sebesar-besarnya atas dukungan dan donasi anda di program #GerakanBersama COVID-19 Berikut kami laporkan jumlah donasi fase kedua* [Photograph]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CBBAv3mgghmo/>

Synchronize Festival [@synchronizefest]. (2020, September 6). *Dengan ini kami menyampaikan pengumuman resmi bahwa Synchronize Fest 2020 tidak akan terselenggara sesuai rencana. Mohon maaf yang sebesar-besarnya kami* [Photograph]. Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CEygzmwg8gU/>

Synchronize Festival [@synchronizefest]. (2020, November 14). *Kami memastikan bahwa kegiatan acara #SynchronizeFest20 menerapkan protokol kesehatan yang berlaku, agar menciptakan rasa aman dan nyaman sehingga terhindar dari* [Video]. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CHj03LagtRV/>

Tetra Pak. (2019). *The Convergence of Health & Environment*. <https://www.tetrapak.com/content/dam/tetrapak/publicweb/gb/en/about/documents/tetra-pak-index-2019.pdf>

The World Bank. (2020, 17 December). *Indonesia Economic Prospects, December 2020: Towards a Secure and Fast Recovery*. [https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/december-2020-indonesia-economic-prospects?cid=eap\\_tt\\_asiapacific\\_en\\_ext](https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/december-2020-indonesia-economic-prospects?cid=eap_tt_asiapacific_en_ext)

Tribuana, L. (2020, July 9). *Kata Penyelenggara soal Kemungkinan Synchronize Fest 2020 Digelar Secara Virtual. Okecelebrity*. <https://celebrity.okezone.com/read/2020/07/09/205/2243615/kata-penyelenggara-soal-kemungkinan-synchronize-fest-2020-digelar-secara-virtual>

- Ulmer, R. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2019). *Effective Crisis Communication: Moving From Crisis to Opportunity* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Ulya, F. N. (2019, 26 September). Mau Kekinian? Yuk Datang ke Synchronize Fest 2019. *Kompas.com*. <https://money.kompas.com/read/2019/09/26/190033726/mau-kekinian-yuk-datang-ke-synchronize-fest-2019>
- Wibisono, N. (2020, October 28). APMI: Babak Baru Industri Showbiz Indonesia. *Tirto.id*. <https://tirto.id/f6rd>
- Woodyatt, A. (2020, 13 August). UK's first socially distanced concert shows what the future of live music might look like. *CNN Travel*. <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/social-distanced-music-festival-intl-scli-gbr/index.html>

## The Dynamics of Communal Participatory Communication to Anticipate COVID-19 Pandemic on WhatsApp Group Media

**Dwi Kartikawati**

Universitas Nasional

Email: dookartika@yahoo.com

*Received Feb. 8, 2021; Revised Apr. 3, 2021; Accepted Apr. 30, 2021*

### Abstract

The research aimed to find communal participatory communication through WhatsApp group media at the Neighbourhood Association (Rukun Tetangga or RT) level in the Pasar Minggu Jakarta area in anticipation of the dangers of Covid-19. The struggle against the pandemic is not only carried out by the government but also by the average Indonesians. Therefore, to anticipate the dangers of Covid-19, the role of the Neighbourhood Association administrators as the agent of the government's efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19 is essential. Participatory communication provides a space for people to exchange information and knowledge. By utilising WhatsApp media, virtual public spaces can be created to establish useful participatory communication. The theoretical framework used in this study is participatory communication, the concept of dynamics, WhatsApp communication media, and the virtual public sphere. This research was qualitative research with a case study method. The results showed that communal participatory communication carried out through WhatsApp groups in preventing the spread of Covid-19 is based on four components, namely heteroglossia, dialogic, polyphony, and carnival. Meanwhile, the typology of participation patterns in citizen communication through WhatsApp is the Co-management pattern involving the community in managing COVID-19 prevention efforts. Communal participatory communication has one common goal, namely to carry out health development in the neighbourhood. This effort makes residents continue to comply with health protocols and ensure the safety of their families and residents. After all, Covid19 is not only a matter of the dangers of the virus but is related to a more complex social situation, namely the economic resilience of the residents.

Keywords: Participatory Communication, Social Media, WhatsApp

### INTRODUCTION

On 30 January 2020, WHO declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2020). This determination was followed by the WHO's novel Coronavirus in humans called Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) on 12 February 2020. Covid-19 is caused by SARS-COV2, which is included in the large family of coronaviruses. This disease is caused by a similar virus that also caused the SARS pandemic in 2003. The symptoms of Covid19 are similar to those of SARS. However, the SARS death rate (9.6%)



was higher than Covid-19 (currently less than 5%). Even so, the number of Covid-19 cases is far more than SARS (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2020). The spread of Covid-19 is also wider and faster than SARS. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact, not only in terms of health but also in various other sectors of life. The struggle against this pandemic does belong to not only the government but also the responsibility of all Indonesian people. So, to anticipate the transmission of Covid-19, the Neighbourhood Association or Rukun Tetangga (RT) managements are an agent of the government's efforts in overcoming and preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus becomes important.

Neighbourhood Association or Rukun Tetangga (RT) is a social organisation with a privilege, namely proximity to the community. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs of Indonesia Number 5 of 2007 concerning Guidelines for Structuring Social Institutions, Neighbourhood Association is an institution formed through local community consultations in the context of government services to the community that has been determined by the Sub-district administration or Head of sub-district (Kementrian Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2017). Neighbourhood Associations are led by a Head whom the residents in the neighbourhood elect. Furthermore, the Neighbourhood Association was formed to increase the community's role, service, welfare, and participation (*Kementrian Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2017*).

Socialisation and participation about the importance of maintaining social distance and implementing social restrictions to the community within the Neighbourhood Association are crucial to prevent the spread of the virus. For this reason, participation and socialisation activities during the Covid-19 pandemic are carried out using WhatsApp Media. WhatsApp is one of the social medias that is currently widely used to benefit socialising and deliver messages both by individuals and groups.

WhatsApp is the most widely used instant messaging application worldwide (Bafadhal, 2017). In Indonesia, there are about 58% of mobile phone users who use the WhatsApp messenger application. Then, WhatsApp can effectively facilitate various social activities of a person, be it individuals, groups, families, or professionals. WhatsApp is a social media whose users can produce independent content. WhatsApp can also help establish relationships with other people. Indeed, web and mobile-based technologies can create interactive platforms where users can create, modify and share content, as well as maintain dialogue (Malka et al., 2015).

Communication through WhatsApp involves participatory communication from all levels of society. Communication is an important activity. In fact, communication is the basis for being able to interact with other people. So, communication is an important activity that is always carried out by each individual to obtain information and achieve goals (Kartikawati, D. Rajagukguk, D L, Sriwartini, 2019). Participation is active involvement in problem identification, solution development, and strategy implementation. According to Soleha (2017, p. 113), there are four indicators in communication: a) heteroglossia, b) dialogic, c) polyphony, d) carnival.

Through the application of participatory communication, the process of delivering messages involving residents is an integral part of efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19. This is because participatory communication provides space for people to exchange

information and knowledge. Furthermore, the dynamics of participatory communication is more centred on the creation of shared meaning which focuses on achieving consensus or agreement (Syahyuti, 2006, p. 192). Participatory communication has several elements, namely freedom, equal rights, and equal access. In the participatory communication paradigm, communication is meaningful as a message shift focusing on informing and persuading behaviour change to provide facilities for the community and government to determine problems. The application of participatory communication not only facilitates the interests of the community in obtaining information but also becomes a medium to raise public awareness so that they have strength in dealing with problems related to efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19. During the pandemic, the involvement of residents in establishing participatory communication was carried out by utilising the WhatsApp group media.

As one of the medias used, WhatsApp is one of the collective participatory media. In the context of being a collective participation medium, WhatsApp is used to share and exchange information, ideas, and experiences and develop relationships and form communities. The way of communicating in the context of collective participation media is considered a participatory culture. According to Murwani (2017), participatory communication culture are, 1) Affiliation – formal and informal membership in online groups or communities such as Facebook, Twitter, or mailing lists; 2) Expression – generating new creative forms such as fan fiction; 3) Collaborative Problem Solving – working together formally and informally to complete assignments and develop new knowledge (e.g. via Wikipedia); 4) Circulation – shaping media streams (like podcasting or blogging). Through WhatsApp media, a public space or public sphere is created that is needed as a medium for residents to interact and communicate. In this public space, individuals can develop themselves and are involved in exchanging directions and goals of existing residents.

Several studies that examine the pattern of participatory communication academically include research by Risyart A. Far Far entitled *“Participatory Communication in the Implementation of Prima Tani in Sungai Kakap District, Pontianak Regency.”* This paper was published in the Scientific Journal of Agribusiness and Fisheries (Agrikan UMMU-Ternate) Volume 4 Issue 1 in 2011 using a quantitative survey approach. This research shows that Participatory Communication in the implementation of Prima Tani has proven effective in increasing farmers’ knowledge and attitudes towards the integrated farming model (Far Far, 2011). In addition, Mutia Dewi & Noer Ayufika Nulul’s research entitled *“Industrial Community Participatory Communication in Supporting Madiun City Branding”* (2018) also shows that the Madiun Industrial Community participates in supporting branding through implementation and utilisation of results. This study also identifies forms of participatory communication in the industrial community in Madiun (Dewi & Nulul, 2018).

However, this latest research is very different and is expected to contribute to the field of communication science because this research examines the communication side of participation. This study also relates the findings to the concept of the public sphere, where public space is created in the WhatsApp medium. The urgency in this study is to look at the dynamics of citizen involvement in establishing participatory communication

that will support the government's efforts in the COVID-19 crisis by utilising WhatsApp group media that encourages the creation of the Public Sphere. This research was conducted on the WhatsApp group of residents at the Ministry of Health Complex, Pasar Minggu Jakarta. This complex area is one of the green zones in cases of Covid-19 transmission. The green zone is where there are no Coronavirus cases in the neighbourhood association area. In this housing complex, the scenario for controlling the spread of the Coronavirus is carried out through active surveillance, testing all suspects, and monitoring cases regularly and periodically. Based on this brief explanation, this latest research examined the dynamics of community participatory communication in anticipating the dangers of the Covid-19 virus through WhatsApp groups?

The concept of participatory communication was originated from the thoughts of Latin American intellectuals, especially Paulo Freire, who was followed by Luis Ramiro Beltra and Juan Diaz Bordenave. The term 'Participatory Communication' was first used officially in a seminar in Latin America sponsored by the Centre for Advanced Studies and Research for Latin America (Sutowo, 2020). Participatory communication emphasises community participation so that they have the opportunity and ability to express their aspirations in the policymaking process in their environment. The general characteristics of participatory communication are (Sinaga et al., 2016):

1. The community is the main actor who is dynamic and active in the process of social change that occurs
2. The communication process is adapted to a particular community or social group
3. Community-based dialogue is intended to help identify, and define the difference between felt needs and real needs
4. Communication is the right of the people
5. The process to achieve deep understanding and awareness of social reality, problems, and solutions.

There are four indicators in participatory communication (Soleha, 2017, p. 113), namely

- a. Heteroglossia which can be interpreted that the development system is based on different groups that complement each other
- b. Dialogue which means that group members know and respect each other as autonomous individuals and each has the right to voice
- c. Polyphony which is the highest form of a dialogue in which disjointed voices increase to be open, clarify each other, and are given space
- d. Carnival, which accommodates informal or casual language and communication styles that are in accordance with the existing habits of the community.

Meanwhile, the typology of how to implement participation in communication that occurs in the community is divided into three things, namely (Shery Arstein, 2013):

1. Non-participation, which is a pattern that places one party as a passive party

2. Controlled participation which is a pattern of participation, in terms of This is controlled by another party. Controlled participation is further divided into two, namely limited participation, which allows the community to participate but is still limited by the authorities and manipulated participation which occurs in disguise and adapts the community so that it remains in accordance with the interests of the power holder
3. Power participation which is a participation pattern that is carried out democratically and facilitate the community as an autonomous entity. Power participation is further divided into several derivative patterns, namely co-management and self-management. The co-management pattern is carried out by involving the community together in managing the existing development. In addition, the community is also invited in the process of making the established policies. Therefore, this pattern views the community as a development partner. On the other hand, the self-management pattern is the most advanced type of power participation. In self-management, the community is directly involved in the entire development process, including policymaking.

WhatsApp is an internet-based social media application that is one of the most popular results of the development of information technology. This internet-based application has the potential to be used as a communication medium because it makes it easier for users to communicate with each other and interact without spending much money. After all, WhatsApp does not use credit but internet data (Rahartri, 2019). According to Citra (2018), there are five reasons why Indonesians prefer WhatsApp over other media:

1. WhatsApp is a simple chat application and does not require a password
2. WhatsApp can be connected directly with cell phone contacts. By simply saving the phone number, the user can synchronise with the contacts of other users. As a result, users do not need to exchange IDs or PINs before they can communicate. WhatsApp can be a convenient and timely replacement for SMS for sending messages and also not a medium for 'stalking.'
3. WhatsApp has a simple interface and focuses on the chat function. Although there is a feature for 'status' updates, this feature is not used as a place to boast between fellow WhatsApp users. The emergence of the status update feature does not reduce the user's focus on its primary function, which is to send short messages. This reason makes the WhatsApp application more preferred because it is not a medium for 'stalking' between users
4. WhatsApp interface is straightforward, easy to understand, and saves internet data. WhatsApp has an advantage over other chat applications, namely an easy-to-understand and straightforward interface, so even new users can easily understand the use of this application. The WhatsApp application can be said to be very light because it does not load many images, saves battery, and saves internet data

5. WhatsApp application is free and has no ads. WhatsApp can be used for free throughout the year and does not display any ads. This makes WhatsApp the most convenient chat application to use compared to other chat applications.

In WhatsApp media, there are various features, including a 'Gallery' for adding photos, 'Contacts' for inserting contacts, a 'Camera' for taking pictures, an 'Audio' for sending voice messages, 'Maps' for sending map coordinates, and even 'Document' for inserting files. All features can be instantly delivered through this free application. These various features certainly add to the ease and convenience of communicating through online media (Rahartri, 2019).

The concept of the public sphere emerged from the work of Jurgen Habermas entitled *"The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society,"* which was published in 1989. The concept of public space is normatively defined as an arena of social life, where people can gather together and freely indicate and discuss various forms of social problems (Widyawati et al., 2011). In this public space, individuals are able to develop themselves and are involved in the exchange of community directions and goals. Habermas describes public space in three critical domains (Jati, 2016), namely

1. Public space as an arena which means that public space provides a basis or place for people to communicate in it
2. Public space is the public itself which indicates that the public has a vital role in realising democracy from the grassroots level
3. The public sphere is an agent, which means that a public sphere is an essential tool in conveying aspirations from the grassroots.

Furthermore, the public sphere is "every individual who comes to the public sphere is allowed to have an opinion on issues concerning the private or public area. In this condition, the public sphere has the primary role as a driver for the communication ability of each level of society" (Prasutomo et al., 2019).

In its development, public space is not only physical and can be sensed. The left of the public space has developed in the non-physical space and cannot be sensed directly by humans. Even so, public space can still be felt and witnessed as a reality. Furthermore, Habermas also revealed that along with the development of technology and communication, public space had penetrated virtual media, better known as cyberspace. This cyberspace basically provides a new public space or virtual public space, a virtual public space available on social media. Public space is now present in cyberspace and forms a communication space in it.

Meanwhile, virtual public space is the second and virtual public space that is used as an alternative or substitute for the first public space or real public space. Virtual public space is a public space that is artificial; it can mean that it is broader, free and open by utilising the internet network in cyberspace. One form of virtual public space that can be formed

in cyberspace is a virtual public space in WhatsApp social media. WhatsApp's virtual public space allows the free and open exchange of various information and public opinions, especially regarding the prevention of Covid-19. Virtual public spaces allow individuals to have conversations or arguments with other individuals that can transcend geographical boundaries.

Dynamics means strength. Dynamics is the behaviour of one person to another that influences each other reciprocally. In dynamics, there is interaction and connectedness between one group and another as a whole (Santoso, 2004, p. 12).

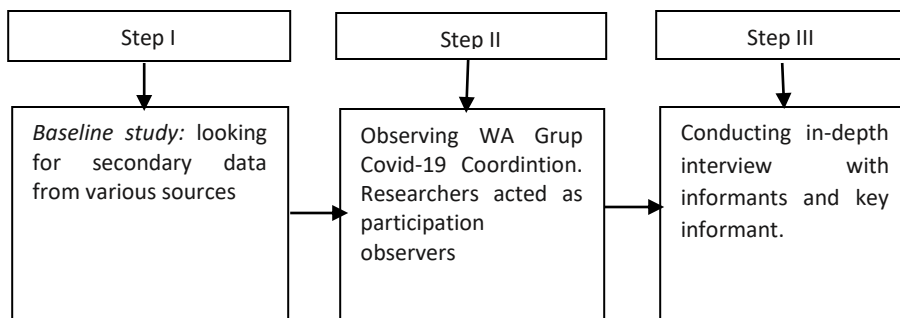
## **METHOD**

The current research uses a qualitative approach. This qualitative research approach is intended for researchers to gain an in-depth and detailed understanding of the problem under study. Qualitative research is research conducted in certain settings, which exist in real life (scientific) to investigate and understand the phenomena that occur, the reasons for their occurrence, and how they occur. Qualitative research is based on the concept of 'going exploring,' which involves a Case-Oriented Study of several cases or single cases (Gunawan, 2016, p. 83).

The research method used in this study is a case study, a research method that uses various data sources that can be used to systematically research, describe, and explain various aspects of an individual, group, program, organisation, or event. Data collection is the most strategic step for this research because the main goal is to get data. To get maximum interview results, the authors use several informants and one key informant. Informants are the designation for samples from qualitative research. The sample in qualitative research is not called the respondent but the resource person or participant.

Furthermore, interviews were conducted by direct interviews with key informants, namely the Head of the neighbourhood association of the MOH Complex, 3 other informants, namely the WhatsApp Group admin for the MOH Complex, and 2 residents of the MOH Complex. In this study, the resource person also acts as a provider of the necessary data and information. Then, observations were made by going directly into the field by observing and noting several things that the authors encountered and deemed sufficient to be able to collect the required data. During the research, the author entered as a member of the Covid-19 Coordination Group at the neighbourhood association level being studied. In the observation activity, the writer acts as Participant Observation. Participant observation is defined as a field strategy that simultaneously searches for the documents used, interviewing informants, making observations, participating and direct involvement, and introspection (Gunawan, 2016). Document studies are also carried out by the author as a supporting aspect of research when the data obtained in the field is lacking. The data collection technique can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research data collection



The data analysis techniques used in this study are (Sugiyono, 2007):

1. Data reduction with the process of selecting, concentrating, and paying attention to the simplification of data that emerges from field notes
2. Presentation of data in the form of a structured set of information that gives the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action
3. Drawing conclusions in the form of a process of drawing and verifying the final conclusion which depends on the size of the collection of field notes, coding, storage, and retrieval methods used. In this study, the data validity technique used was triangulation. Triangulation can be done by checking data from various sources in various ways and at various times. The author compared the observation data with the interview data obtained and then makes a meaningful conclusion. The author also compares the data from the main informant or key informant with information from other secondary informants

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The results of this study are organised into three parts: WhatsApp group profiles, typology of participation forms of WhatsApp group members, and communal participatory communication.

The WhatsApp groups studied in this study are virtual and consist of residents who live in the Pasar Minggu Health Department Complex, South Jakarta. This WhatsApp group was formed to follow the residents' alertness to the COVID-19 pandemic at the neighbourhood association level. This group is a form of self-empowerment with a community group system based on the Neighbourhood association in forming a citizen communication system. The Head of the neighbourhood association 01 RW 07 in the Pasar Minggu Department Complex is the group leader. Furthermore, this group functions to unite steps to anticipate and follow up on all developments regarding the spread of Covid-19. It is hoped that this group will be able to explain unclear information and convey the latest situation regarding the development of the virus in the local neighbourhood association. This group consists of 53 participants representing residents from each house in the Pasar Minggu Health Department Complex. Figure 2 presents the group interface.



Figure 2. WhatsApp Group Coordination Covid-19 Interface



The purpose of the formation of a WhatsApp group based on the explanation of critical informants, among others, is establishing a citizen communication system, establishing a task force and person in charge of the field, issuing regulations for the safety of residents, ensuring communication is carried out to all residents, ensuring communication with residents with the status of people without Covid-19 symptoms, and in the supervision of Covid-19, not to embarrass people with Covid-19, and prevent the emergence of social stigma.

Furthermore, the key informant explained that the form of communication in coordinating essential steps to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus was that the neighbourhood association formally gave an official letter containing several steps that needed to be taken to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus in the environment. This formal letter shows the level of urgency that symbolises that the Covid-19 issue is getting more and more official attention, especially regarding the coordination of the task force structure at the neighbourhood association or neighbourhood council and sub-district level. In the implementation in the field, the neighbourhood association carried out manual socialisation by installing several warnings in the form of posters or billboards containing PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) points, calls for maintaining health and cleanliness, 14-day quarantine rules, as well as prohibitions on gathering and restrictions road access. Then, online, the neighbourhood association formed two WhatsApp groups, namely 'Task Force Coordination' and 'Residents Coordination.' The 'Task Force Coordination' group discussed more strategic issues regarding COVID-19, especially before being disseminated to a wider group of residents. The last is the interpersonal communication approach, namely by meeting with residents directly and informally, without being arranged and not in groups. In addition, when meeting other residents, the neighbourhood association administrator shared the development of the environmental situation and programs related to Covid-19 in the neighbourhood.

In the context of the communication that takes place in the WhatsApp group, The Head of the neighbourhood association is a communicator who provides information



transparently to all residents, including information about procedures for dealing with COVID-19, quarantine measures, to the provision of food or other logistics. In terms of conveying information and convincing residents of the dangers of Covid-19, neighbourhood association administrators always use official information from the sub-districts in the form of official letters, e-brochure leaflets, or WhatsApp posts from the sub-district. This official information will be forwarded or reported back to the citizen level.

Official information is more convincing than free posts from various social media sources. Therefore, one of the tasks of the neighbourhood association management and the task force is to check and re-check to ensure that information is true and not a hoax. Another approach is Conditioning, which is to build a psychological situation that the environment is in an emergency. This approach is carried out by installing several 'tools' in the form of warning posters and closing several access roads. With this unusual change, residents will feel that there is an urgency that must be considered.

During the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) period in Jakarta, residents are expected to comply with the protocols contained in the PSBB, especially regarding the principles of family health and safety. On the other hand, residents are also expected to understand that COVID-19 is a matter of the dangers of the virus and affects more complex social situations, one of which is the economic resilience of residents around the complex. The management also hopes that residents report the condition of their families or people who live at home in a transparent manner. The report concerns the status of illness, OTG (Asymptomatic People), ODP (People Under Supervision), PDP (Patients Under Surveillance), Suspect or Positive. By means of transparent reporting, data to the task force and above (neighbourhood council and sub-district) will be easier and more accurate.

From the results of observations and interviews conducted by researchers, it was found that the typology of the forms of participation of WhatsApp group members includes the Power Participation pattern. Power Participation is a pattern of participation that is carried out democratically and facilitates the community as autonomous. In addition, it is also observed that there is a pattern of Co-management carried out by involving the community together in the management of development. In the Co-management pattern, the community continues to update the health conditions of their families and actively report them. If there are some unusual conditions, the admin will immediately provide a quick response for further follow-up. The key informant explained that even though participation in Co-management took place, there were obstacles experienced in using WhatsApp groups. If there is a problem, The Head of the neighbourhood association will directly contact the residents who are experiencing problems and ask about the reasons and conditions of the residents concerned. The residents are then

invited to share information or updates directly. The admin also encourages residents to continue to update conditions by showing who has and has not updated. If residents do not want to join the WhatsApp group, the neighbourhood association will ask other family members, even household assistants, to update directly to the group.

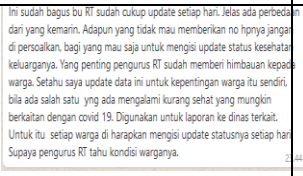

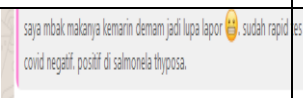

The Heteroglossia indicator is the concept that the development system should accommodate different groups and communities so that they complement each other and work synergistically. For example, the diversity of groups in WhatsApp groups is that although there are various age differences (all members are adults), occupations, cultures, and others, they have one common goal, namely to carry out health development in the neighbourhood association area on an ongoing basis to prevent Covid19.

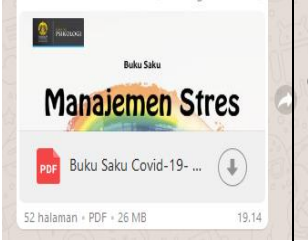
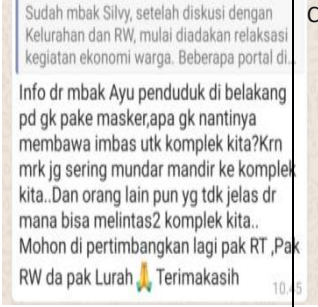
Meanwhile, the dialogical indicators include interactions that occur within the WhatsApp group as a whole. The meaning of the dialogical indicator is, of course, knowing and respecting other voices as subjects, no longer just as objects of communication in the process of preventing the danger of Covid-19. Residents can express opinions, participate in interacting by asking questions, and submitting their opinions and complaints. In the end, if there is a problem, a solution will be found together.

In the polyphony indicator, which is an advanced form of dialogue, residents can provide opinions, input without any intervention, without any emphasis on one view over another, and there is no dominance in conveying ideas, suggestions and criticism. So polyphony is an ideal form of participatory communication because the various diversity that exists is realised and then combined collectively to strengthen each other.

The carnival indicator on participatory communication is that the communication that occurs takes place in informal situations. WhatsApp group members are encouraged to participate in the carnival freely. So, this indicator is an effort to create a sense of kinship and brotherhood together by being aware of the situation around residents and immediately reporting things that are felt to be dangerous to the environment, especially related to the development of Covid-19. For example, in the housing complex that is the subject of the study, there is a connecting door with residents next to the complex, which is prone to be used for traffic by non-residents. So, this door is always locked. However, sometimes according to informant 1, the door could suddenly open. If this happens, residents will immediately report to the neighbourhood association officials via telephone or WhatsApp group media.

Table 1. Forms of messages and communication goals of coordination as a form of mutual concern

No	Message Content	Purpose	Example of WA Screenshot	Themes/issues
1.	Daily Health Report from each home or family representative. For example, the condition of each resident living in one house is reported in full	To note that the initial conditions of all residents are in a safe and healthy condition		Health
2.	Health report for people who are sick or unwell. For example, reports on the condition of sick residents, mentioning what illness, for example, fever, have been to the doctor or not, and others.	Conditions are known early to be anticipated		Health
3	Reports on the distribution of assistance from complex residents to residents for underprivileged families and others. For example, distribution of groceries to residents outside the neighbourhood association but still within the same neighbourhood council	As a social safety net for affected residents		Providing social assistance
4.	Reports of disease conditions other than Covid-19, such as dengue fever which is no less dangerous than Covid19. For example, reports of residents' illness conditions, including dengue fever, typhus, and others.	To know and anticipate next steps, such as fogging, etc		Health

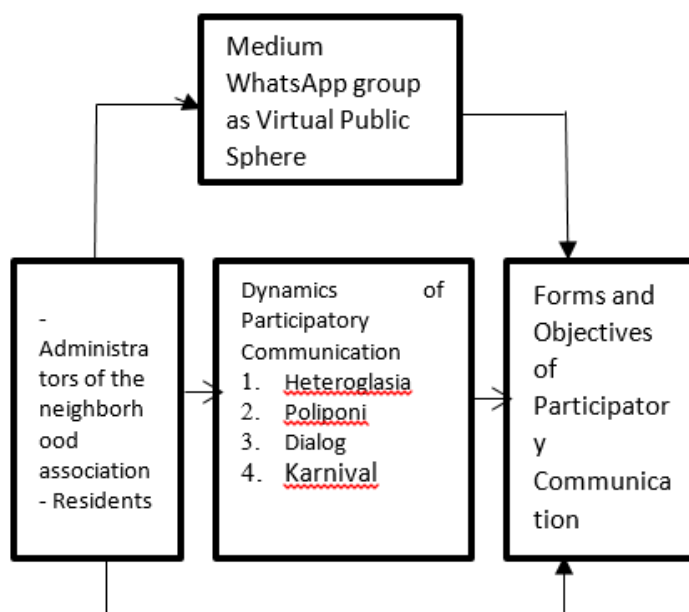
5.	Sharing information on anticipating stress handling in the face of a pandemic. For example, providing files and videos about tips to cheer up, etc	For education on the mental health of residents during PSBB		Maintenance of mental health conditions
6.	Sharing dialogue and problem-solving related to the sense of security of residents in the PSBB situation. For example, the decision to install a portal to maintain the safety and health of residents, reduce vehicle traffic, provide sanitation equipment and others.	For problem-solving to the problems encountered		Citizen safety

In the dynamics of communication, WhatsApp messages show a dynamic change from the themes of concern that are built. In the communication process through WhatsApp, there are few dynamics of differences of opinion on a particular issue that opens up a common space for making joint decisions. The author summarises the four themes of concern found in this study: health, maintaining mental health, social assistance, and citizen safety. Thus, the dynamics of citizen communication through WhatsApp groups raises a shared concern (domain of common sense) towards others in difficult times, which is very important in social life.

The key informant explained that the obstacle in participatory communication through WhatsApp media was that there were residents who lived in the neighbourhood association areas but did not have a DKI Jakarta ID card or were outside the neighbourhood association 01 areas. In particular, relatives and boarding house residents often went out or travelled without reporting the boarding house owner or the neighbourhood association. Moreover, they do not join the residents' WhatsApp group. Then, the next obstacle is stall workers and construction workers whose exact numbers and origins are unclear, including their working hours. This condition makes it difficult to collect data, especially regarding health conditions. So, in this situation, communication of citizen participation is very much needed on a reciprocal basis.

In participatory communication that occurs through WhatsApp group media, the use of a participatory approach allows all the problems faced to become common problems, especially concerning the Covid19 pandemic. That way, ways of solving it can be reached by means of joint deliberation to find solutions. Communication activities that occur in the virtual public space of this WhatsApp group allow everyone to be able to access information about various things, primarily related to the prevention of the Covid-19 virus, through an equal open dialogue. Furthermore, WhatsApp's virtual public space allows the exchange of various important information regarding the development of the Covid-19 virus and public opinions that are offered freely and openly to find solutions to problems faced by residents. In this WhatsApp medium, the Public Space becomes an arena for residents to tell stories and express feelings related to the development of the virus and its effects and the various activities they carry out. As a result, residents obtained various positive aspects of WhatsApp groups at the neighbourhood association level, including ease of interaction and communication, WhatsApp media as a fast medium in conveying information so that it is easily absorbed, residents have the same opportunity to access information related to the development of the Coronavirus and how to anticipate it.

*Figure 3. Research Results Framework*



The study results show that participatory communication at the neighbourhood association level must be carried out to anticipate the dangers of Covid19. This is done considering that the neighbourhood association is at the forefront of preventing the spread of the virus at the community level. Communication is carried out, of course, by involving all residents who at the same time use WhatsApp as a communication medium.

Furthermore, WhatsApp media has become a vast public sphere. Culturally, in this public space, a new culture of democratisation has been born. WhatsApp has become an egalitarian space, and a means for various purposes in common life, especially to solve common problems around anticipating the dangers of Covid19. The public space opens a common concern (domain of common concern) on virus problems. It opens communication spaces in the form of concern for residents' health, concern for mental conditions during a pandemic, care through community social assistance, and concern for residents' security conditions. Thus, this research provides theoretical implications on the contribution of public space in social media that bridges the occurrence of participatory communication. In line with the author's criticism of participatory communication, that in supporting health development, it is carried out by participatory communication with a bottom-up approach and a focus on micro-development.

For this reason, the author believes that it is urgent to develop participatory communication in the "sharing process" of communication carried out through multi-platform media and convergence. Thus, participatory communication must be integrated with "converged communication" based on communication and information technology with all multi-platform channels. Thus the results of this study provide their own challenges in communication science. However, in practical implications, the research results can contribute to knowledge for the wider community because WhatsApp media creates a living space that is able to have a positive impact on social life.

## CONCLUSION

Communal participatory communication to prevent Covid-19 shows the diversity of groups in WhatsApp groups. There are various kinds of differences in terms of age, occupation, culture, and others. This difference is the basis of the four elements or indicators of participatory communication, namely heteroglossia, dialogic, polyphony and carnival. The communication dynamics have one common goal: to carry out health development in the neighbourhood association area of the Pasar Minggu MOH Complex on an ongoing basis. Another goal is to eliminate or reduce communication barriers that occur so that efforts to anticipate the dangers of the spread of Covid-19 can be achieved. Residents can express opinions in WhatsApp's virtual public space, as stated by Habermas. Group participants participate in interactions by asking questions, expressing opinions and complaints, and finding solutions together. Finally, the solutions found are carried out collectively to strengthen each other and continuously strengthen the shared sense of concern (domain of common concern). This action is taken so that residents are aware of the social situation around them, especially those related to the development and prevention of the spread of the Covid-19 virus based on the health protocol that has been set. Thus, the results of this study significantly open the discourse of convergence-based participatory communication, which will open a wider public space for Indonesia's development in all fields that are beneficial to the social life of the community.

## REFERENCES

- Bafadhal, O. M. (2017). Studi Konsumsi Berita Lewat Group Whatsapp. *Jurnal Komunikasi Indonesia*, 5, 49–56. <http://www.jke.feb.ui.ac.id/index.php/jkmi/article/view/8628>
- Citra, S. (2018). 5 Alasan Kenapa Orang Indonesia, Mungkin Juga Seluruh Dunia Jatuh Cinta Pada WhatsApp di Banding Media Chat Lainnya. <https://www.hipwee.com/opini/5-alasankenapa-orang-indonesia-mungkin-jugaseluruh-dunia-jatuh-cinta-pada-whatsappdi-banding-media-chat-lainnya/>
- Dewi, M., & Nulul, N. A. (2018). Komunikasi Partisipatif Masyarakat Industri dalam Mendukung Branding Kota Madiun. *Jurnal ILMU KOMUNIKASI*, 15(1), 75–90. <https://doi.org/10.24002/jik.v15i1.1340>
- Far Far, R. A. (2011). Komunikasi partisipatif dalam pelaksanaan prima tani di Kecamatan Kakap Kabupaten Pontianak. *Agrikan: Jurnal Agribisnis Perikanan*, 4(1), 37. <https://doi.org/10.29239/j.agrikan.4.1.37-41>
- Imam, G. (2013). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Teori dan Praktik. In *Jakarta: Bumi Aksara*.
- Jati, W. R. (2016). Cyberspace, Internet, dan Ruang Publik Baru: Aktivisme Online Politik Kelas Menengah Indonesia. *Jurnal Pemikiran Sosiologi*, 3(1), 25. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jps.v3i1.23524>
- Kartikawati, D. Rajagukguk, D L, Sriwartini, Y. (2019). *Strategi Komunikasi Pendidikan Multikultural di Sekolah Inklusi*. CV Lentera Kata Demak Jawa Tengah.
- Kementerian Kesehatan. (2020). *Infeksi Emerging Kementerian Kesehatan RI - Situasi Terkini Perkembangan Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) 10 Februari 2020*. Kemenkes RI. <https://covid19.kemkes.go.id/situasi-infeksi-emerging/situasi-terkini-perkembangan-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-10-februari-2020/>
- Malka, V., Ariel, Y., & Avidar, R. (2015). Fighting, worrying and sharing: Operation “Protective Edge” as the first WhatsApp war. In *Media, War and Conflict*, 8(3), 329–344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635215611610>
- Murwani, E. (2017). Literasi Budaya Partisipatif Penggunaan Media Baru pada Siswa SMA di DKI Jakarta. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 15(1), 48–59. <https://doi.org/10.31315/jik.v15i1.2154>
- Permendagri. (2017). *Permendagri Nomor 2 Tahun 2017*. 13–14.
- Prasutomo, E., Wijaya, H., & Weismann, I. T. J. (2019). The Role of Public Sphere According to Jurgen Habermas’s Perspective for Multicultural Societies in the Indonesian Context. *FUADUNA: Jurnal Kajian Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan*, 3(2), 79. <https://doi.org/10.30983/fuaduna.v3i2.2548>
- Pujihartati, H. S., & Wijaya, M. (2019). *Dinamika Kelompok Sosial*, 8(1), 121–130.
- Rahartri. (2019). Media Komunikasi Efektif pada Layanan Jasa Informasi: Studi Kasus di Kawasan Pusat Penelitian Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Teknologi (Puspiptek). *Pustakawan*, 26(2), 109–117.
- Shery Arstein. (2013). Pengaruh Lama Tinggal dalam Pengelolaan Lingkungan Permukiman. *Journal ComTech BINUS*, 4(1), 24–32.
- Sinaga, D., Winoto, Y., & Perdana, F. (2016). Membangun Komunikasi Partisipatif Masyarakat Upaya Melestarikan Tanaman Salak Lokal di Manonjaya Tasikmalaya. *Jurnal Kajian Informasi Dan Perpustakaan*, 4(2), 191. <https://doi.org/10.24198/jkip.v4i2.10174>
- Soleha, F. (2017). Komunikasi Partisipatif Pada Program Pos Pembinaan Terpadu (Studi

- Kasus Di Kelurahan Jawa, Kecamatan Samarinda Ulu, Kota Samarinda),. *EJournal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 5(2), 110–123.
- Sugiyono. (2007). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif R dan D. *Bandung Alfabeta*.
- Sutowo, I. R. (2020). Komunikasi partisipatif dalam pengembangan kewirausahaan sosial di pandeglang, banten. *Expose: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 3(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.33021/exp.v3i1.885>
- Syahyuti. (2006). *30 konsep penting dalam pembangunan pedesaan dan pertanian*. Bina Rena Pariwara; Indonesia: Bina Rena Pariwara. [https://openlibrary.org/books/OL21095462M/30\\_konsep\\_penting\\_dalam\\_pembangunan\\_pedesaan\\_dan\\_pertanian](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL21095462M/30_konsep_penting_dalam_pembangunan_pedesaan_dan_pertanian)
- Widyawati, K., Ernawati, A., & Puspita Dewi, F. (2011). Peranan Ruang Terbuka Publik terhadap Tingkat Solidaritas dan Kepedulian Penghuni Kawasan Perumahan di Jakarta. *Jurnal Ilmiah Faktor Exacta*, 4(3), 246-260. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30998/faktorexacta.v4i3.54>



## Covid-19 and Cinemas: The Importance of Creating the Engagement with Customers through Social Media

**Ramadhan Maulana Putra & Intan Primadini**

Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara

Email: ramadhanmaulana864@gmail.com, intan.primadini@umn.ac.id

*Received Apr. 11, 2021; Revised May 24, 2021; Accepted Jun. 29, 2021*

### Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in one of the largest cinema companies in Indonesia, Cinema XXI, to temporarily close their business. Despite the closing, Cinema XXI is still trying to build the engagement with their customers on social media by carrying out marketing activities through the Instagram @Cinema.21. Therefore, the aim of this study is to find out how Cinemas utilizing social media in creating customer engagement during Covid-19. This study is a quantitative research and data is obtained through survey using questionnaire. This research questionnaire was distributed to 400 respondents. Based on the result of this study, it is known that Read Dimension has the highest influence on Engagement. Furthermore, Social Media Marketing was found to significantly influence Customer Engagement.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Cinema XXI, Social Media, Social Media Marketing, Customer Engagement.

### INTRODUCTION

After a week full of hard work, some people choose to go to the cinema to relieve their stress. Unfortunately, that activity has to stop due to Covid-19 virus outbreak. Covid-19 began to spread in Indonesia since early March 2020 (Mukaromah, 2020). Until the end of September, the number of positive victims of Covid-19 has increased to a total of 177,571 people (Tionardus, 2020). Therefore, the government immediately took firm action by issuing a regulation to close all sectors of the entertainment industry in order to break the chain of spread of the virus. One of those affected is the cinema network in Indonesia. Reported by the cnnindonesia.com (2020), the spread of the Covid-19 virus is assumed to have had a significant impact on the film industry globally, which suffered losses of up to US \$ 5 billion or equivalent to Rp71.2 trillion. Although cinema networks in Indonesia cannot operate physically, these conditions can provide opportunities for them to continue to build relationships with customers through activities on social media.

One of the cinema networks in Indonesia that focused in establishing relationships with customers through social media in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic situation is Cinema XXI. For almost 32 years, Cinema XXI has been committed to always providing the

experience and enjoyment of watching the best quality movies for Indonesian people (21cineplex.com). Cinema XXI also has owned social media such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube. Technology advances, especially in the field of information have changed human communication patterns. The form of technological advances in information is the emergence of social media as a means of modern communication (Martanatasha & Primadini, 2019).

Social media is an internet-mediated technology that allows its creators to share information, ideas and other forms of expression through virtual community networks (Quesenberry, 2019, p. 8). With the Covid-19 outbreak and the closing of all cinema networks, Cinema XXI must modify their strategy in reaching audiences or the public through social media by maximizing creative content on the digital platform. The use of social media used is also seen from the number of active users who follow it. All cinema networks in Indonesia get around their losses by taking advantage of technological sophistication to stay connected with customers and regain people's trust to watch movies in theaters (Tionardus, 2020). According to Bredl (2014, p. 1) in Benedict & Ariestya (2020), Instagram is one of the most influential communication channels for marketing activities.

This study only focuses on the Instagram Cinema XXI because the intensity of the use of Instagram is more dominant than other social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. This is due to the superiority of Instagram which has a variety of features to be able to produce many types of content (Primadini, 2019). Instagram is one of the increasingly popular communication platforms and is considered to represent a company to carry out activities that can build relationships with consumers. According to Miles (2019, p. 66) in creating content, Instagram has three effective ways to publish the content. Among them, you can use features such as feeds, stories, and IGTV.

The activities currently being carried out by Cinema XXI through its Instagram account are part of social media marketing activities. According to Tuten & Solomon (2018, p. 53), social media marketing is the use of social media technology, channels, and software to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offers that have value for organizational stakeholders. Social media marketing activities are often used by an organization or company as an option for building relationships with customers through social media. This term is known as customer engagement, which is a representation of how customers who are interested and psychologically invested in a brand feel, as well as their feelings and emotions about the brand (Smith, 2016, pp. 126-127). Therefore, it is important for a company to continue to build customer engagement, especially in the current difficult conditions which have resulted in the entire cinema network in Indonesia having to temporarily close, and to restore public confidence to watch movies in theaters.

The benefits of customer engagement from the company's perspective, including being able to increase customer satisfaction, acquire new customers, increase market share, and increase customer retention (Zyminkowska, 2019, p. 128). There is also a relationship between social media marketing and customer engagement, as stated by Chaffey (2016)

in (Utami & Saputri, 2020) that in social media marketing there is an interaction that can produce positive engagement between consumers and brands. Therefore, this study wants to find out how Cinemas utilizing social media in creating customer engagement during Covid-19.

Gunelius (2011, pp. 16-21) stated that to be successful in social media marketing, a company must review the four dimensions of social media marketing and commit to incorporating these four dimensions into social media marketing activities at all times:

1. Read: A successful social media marketing plan should start with research. The company keeps abreast of the latest news and information, dig up as much information as possible related to the business;
2. Create: Creating great content is the most important part of any social media marketing plan. Companies must create interesting content, upload content consistently, and be transparent (honest and reliable);
3. Share: A unique aspect of social media marketing design is content sharing as a method of indirectly marketing a business. Companies can share useful content so that it can be distributed more and more online;
4. Discuss: When companies create and share engaging content, online audiences will naturally grow. These audiences can interact through their responses on social media and build relationships from the responses given by the company.

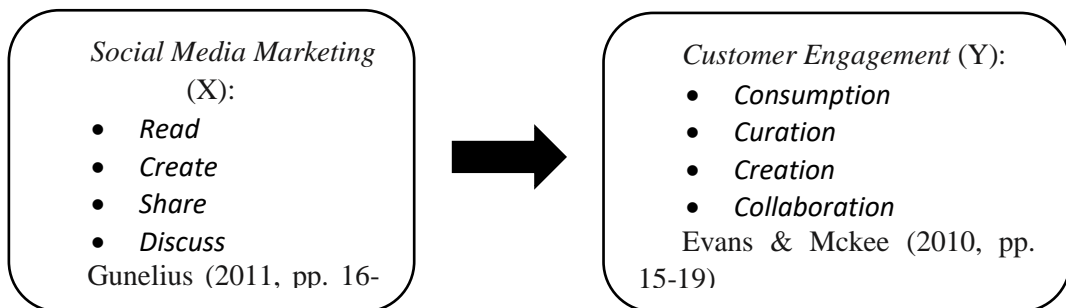
Meanwhile, according to Evans & Mckee (2010, pp. 15-19), the process of customer engagement has moved consumers or customers into a conversation related to brands, products, or services outside the act of consumption and work together to collaborate, as well as generating experiences that increase over time.

To achieve this process, there are four dimensions of customer engagement to be applied:

1. Consumption: Social media context in which there are activities to read, view or watch, and download or store digital content;
2. Curation: An action taken by consumers to provide value, comment on, and name accounts on digital content;
3. Creation: A way to create digital content by itself, often involve community members in it;
4. Collaboration: A form of collaboration that involves consumers and companies through digital content to get feedback.

In general, Chaffey & Chadwick (2016, pp. 308-309) states that proactive customers will be more likely to seek information and interact with brands through content, search, and social media marketing. By implementing an engagement process, customers will continue to have repeated interactions so that they can strengthen the emotional, psychological, or physical properties of the customer in a brand. The two of them also complement and related to each other. The analysis model in this study can describe the relationship between the two variables, namely social media marketing (X) and customer engagement (Y) as seen in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. Analysis Model



Source: Research Data, 2020

## METHODS

This study is a quantitative research and the data is collected through questionnaires. Neuman (2014) characterized quantitative research as survey research in which the researcher efficiently requests an enormous number of individuals similar questions and records their answers afterward. Quantitative research uses instruments and statistical analysis with the aim of testing hypotheses or predetermined temporary answers. This study aims to explain the relationship between the variables and generally uses a correlation or regression hypothesis test. Later, the data will be processed using IBM SPSS version 24 to see the final results and draw conclusion.

The population this study is the followers of @Cinema.21 Instagram account, amounted to 1,230,670 followers when this research was conducted. This study uses purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, which is a sampling technique by considering certain conditions and does not provide equal opportunities for each member of the sample taken from the population (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 85). Based on the information from medium.com (2020), the target audience of @Cinema.21 Instagram account are men and women who are movie lovers with the age range of 16-30 years. Therefore, the sample criteria specified in this study are as follows:

- a. Age 15-34 years
- b. Follow the Instagram account @Cinema.21
- c. An active user of Instagram

The criteria were chosen based on the concept of customer engagement so that not all followers Instagram account @Cinema.21 can become the sample. Only those who meet the criteria can fill in the questionnaire. The sample size was 400 participants, which was calculated by using Yamane formula, and having the acceptable sampling error of 0.5.

Of all 400 samples, there were 7 samples that had to be removed after doing the boxplot, because the data had a score that was quite extreme or often referred to as outlier data,

with far different numbers from one another. Therefore, it was decided to use data from 393 participants.

We developed a 83-item questionnaire from the literature review. The questionnaire assessed the participants' perception of the read, create, share, and discuss dimensions of the social media marketing in different media, i.e. feed, Instastory, and IGTV, featured by @Cinema21 Instagram account. It also evaluated the participants' consumption, curation, creation, and collaboration in engaging on social media. We used four-point Likert scale to calculate the summation of the user's acceptance of social media marketing, which has been doing by the @Cinema21, and also to calculate their engagement with the account. The questionnaire was piloted prior to the study and demonstrated a good validity, reliability, and normality.

Data were analyzed using univariate analysis to describe the participants' characteristics and their perception of the social media marketing strategy implemented by @Cinema21 through the contents (feed, Instastory, IGTV) and their engagement with the account. We then analyzed both variables (social media marketing and engagement) using correlation analysis. Correlation analysis is a method for analyzing and identifying the relationship between the two variables to form a correlation coefficient in a research (Sarwono, 2012, p. 57).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through the frequency data in table below, it can be shown that most respondents were female (52,4%) and aged 20-24 years (60,1%).

**Table 1. Gender Frequency Data**

Jenis Kelamin					
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
<i>Valid</i>	Laki-laki	187	47.6	47.6	47.6
	Perempuan	206	52.4	52.4	100
	Total	393	100	100	

Source: Research Data, 2020

**Table 2. Age Frequency Data**

Usia					
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
<i>Valid</i>	15-19	68	17.3	17.3	17.3
	20-24	236	60.1	60.1	77.4
	25-30	49	12.5	12.5	89.8
	31-34	40	10.2	10.2	100
	Total	393	100	100	

Source: Research Data, 2020

This survey found that the overall perception on the social media marketing through Instagram contents was good. This can be seen from the mean values of all the variables which are above 3 (table 3). On the social media marketing variables, respondents agreed that @Cinema21 allows followers to give feedback on the IGStories (mean = 3.59), yet they rated the lowest that @Cinema21 responding to followers' comment on IGstories (mean = 3.11). On the engagement variable, the highest rating was given by the respondents both on the statement of "noticing the feeds uploaded" and "liking the feeds" (mean = 3.46). While the lowest rating was on the statement "Creating IGTV content with #RinduNontondiXX1 theme" (mean = 2.73). Overall, it can be concluded that the use of feeds in delivering the messages is better accepted than other contents.

**Table 3. Perception on the @Cinema21 Instagram Contents and Customer Engagement**

Variables	Highest Indicators	Mean	Mode	Lowest Indicators	Mean	Mode
Read (X1)	Feeds provide the latest information about film industry	3.49	4	Stories provide information about health protocol in the cinema	3.24	3
Create (X2)	Feeds provide truthful information	3.47	3	IGstories & IGTV provide interactive captions	3.22	3
Share (X3)	@Cinema21 allows followers to share feeds	3.51	4	IGTV shares useful information	3.27	3
Discuss (X4)	@Cinema21 allows followers to give feedback on the IGStories	3.59	4	@Cinema21 responding to followers' comment on IGstories	3.11	3
Consumption (Y1)	Noticing the feeds uploaded	3.46	4	Keep the feeds with screenshot	2.95	3
Curation (Y2)	Liking the feeds	3.46	4	Mentioning @Cinema21 on IGTV	2.96	3
Creation (Y3)	#RinduNontondiXX1 Hashtag reflects the audience's longing	3.42	4	Creating IGTV content with #RinduNontondiXX1 theme	2.73	3
Collaboration (Y4)	Recommending the @Cinema21 feeds on personal social media	3.25	3	Receiving feedback from others on IGTV	3.03	3

Source: Research Data, 2020

The finding that feeds provide the latest information about film industry was supported by statement by Gunelius (2011, p. 17) who said finding the idea from current situation can create a content with good quality. In addition, using feeds to provide the latest information about product or service offered by the organization can strengthen the

company branding (Sirclo, 2020). Thus, @Cinema21 Instagram account should always post the latest information about film industry.

An interesting result in this study showed that most of participants agreed that feeds provide information about the ticket prices in Cinema XXI (mean = 3.43) and less agreed with feeds provide information about Dapur XXI menu prices (mean = 3.27). The finding is relevant with to Mardiasika's (2012) notion that public perception of ticket prices is the main reference to watch movies, other prices as cinema snacks are considered afterwards.

The result that @Cinema21 allows followers to give feedback on the IGStories has the highest score was supported by Miles (2019). In his book, Miles (2019) stated that Instagram stories have a variety of features that can be used to make it easier to get feedback from the audience. That is the reason why @Cinema21 Instagram account used the available feedback features on IGStories, such as polls, emoji slider, quiz, and questions box to develop engagement with their audience.

A contradictive result related IGStories showed in "@Cinema21 responding to followers' comment on IGstories" statement which gained a less positive approval from the respondents. It means, although @Cinema21 Instagram account has already use various features on IGStories, they haven't actively responding to the feedback given by their followers. According to Erdogmus & Cicek (2012) in (Imron, Wardani, & Rokhmawati, 2018), it is said that to achieve the success of a brand on social media, the company should updating the content which is still not optimal in involving the audience. Therefore, the possibility of getting the involvement from the customers is also increasing.

The finding that most respondents agreed that they are liking the feeds is supported by previous study by Rohadian & Amir (2019) which stated that the more the number of likes given on their feed, it means that the content is interesting. It can be concluded that the company has succeeded in creating initial engagement with its followers.

The lowest rating given by respondents was on statement "Creating IGTV content with #RinduNontondiXX1 theme." There is an article on cermati.com (2019) which states that IGTV content allows its users to make a video vertically with a longer duration. IGTV content is more suitable for people who like to make videos, and it means not all respondents want to create IGTV content with specific theme.

In this study, to be able to determine the cause and effect relationship between the social media marketing variable (X) and the customer engagement variable (Y), correlation and regression analysis were performed. From the study, it is known that the social media marketing was significantly related with customer engagement (Pearson Correlation value 0.657). According to Sugiyono (2019, p. 274), the number 0.657 is in the range of the coefficient interval from 0.60 to 0.799 which means that it has a strong and positive relationship to the dependent variable.

**Table 4. The Relationship between Social Media Marketing and Customer Engagement**

Variables (X)	R-square
Read	0.325
Create	0.405
Share	0.431
Discussion	0.443
Social media marketing	0.432

\*Variable Y: Engagement

Source: Research Data, 2020

From the table above, it is known that Discussion has the highest correlation with engagement while Read has the lowest correlation. Another result found from this study is the value of R Square of social media marketing is 0.432 or the equivalent of 43.2%. Thus, customer engagement was influenced by social media marketing by 43.2%, while the remaining 56.8% was influenced by several other factors not mentioned in this study.

The finding that social media marketing has correlation with customer engagement is supported by previous study of Syifa (2017). She mentioned that the content marketing has a correlation of 59.9% with customer engagement. She also stated that to build customer engagement, especially on Instagram, was not only influenced by social media marketing activities but also other factors such as content marketing which consists of aspects of reader cognition, sharing motivation, persuasion, decision making, and life factors that are possible to have a significant effect.

In addition, according to Forbes (2015) in Toor, Husnain, & Hussain (2017), social media marketing is significantly related to customer engagement. Thus, companies must take advantage of social media to create interactions with consumers, serving as a platform for improving products and promoting brands. Furthermore, if companies want to restore public confidence related to the safety of watching movies in theaters during Covid-19, they have to implement several stages in building customer interaction on social media, i.e. connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, and engagement (Sashi, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

From the results of the study, it is known that social media marketing applied by @Cinema21 Instagram account was perceived good by the respondents. For social media marketing variables, respondents mostly agreed that that @Cinema21 allows followers to give feedback on the IGStories. However, respondents also assumed that although @Cinema21 Instagram account has already allowed the followers to give feedback on IGStories, they haven't actively responding to the feedback given by their followers. On the engagement variable, most respondents stated they were noticing and also giving 'likes' to the feeds uploaded by Cinema21 Instagram account. Yet, creating content on IGTV was perceived to have a minimum impact on customer engagement. Overall, respondents considered that the use of feeds in delivering the messages is better accepted than other contents. Furthermore, social media marketing influenced 43.2% of



consumer engagement, while many other factors not listed in this study influenced the remaining 56.8%.

Suggestions that can be given to Cinemas that utilizing social media marketing on Instagram are:

1. Maximizing the use of feeds in conveying the information about the film industry, general information about Cinema XX1, and health protocols in the form of captions and visuals.
2. The use of features on IGStories were well-received in creating engagement with followers and hence needs to be maintain regularly. While at the same time, the @Cinema21 account needs to respond actively to the feedback from their followers by replying the message or reposting the stories.
3. IGTV was identified to have minimum impact on creating customer engagement so more efforts should be made to persuade the followers in creating content and mentioning @Cinema21 on IGTV.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The authors express gratitude to Universitas Multimedia Nusantara for supervising the research. The authors also would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions.

## REFERENCE

- 21cineplex.com. (n.d.). Retrieved 2021, from <https://21cineplex.com/21profile>
- Benedict, E., & Ariestya, A. (2020). Pengaruh Penggunaan Media Sosial Instagram terhadap Sikap Berdonasi Melalui Platform Crowdfunding. *Jurnal Ultimacomm*, 12(2), 167-184.
- Chaffey, D., & Chadwick, F. E. (2016). *Digital Marketing* (6th ed.). Edinburgh: Pearson.
- CNN Indonesia. (2020, March 03). Retrieved from [cnnindonesia.com: https://www.cnnindonesia.com/hiburan/20200303111129-220-480027/industri-film-global-diperkirakan-rugi-rp712-t-akibat-corona](https://www.cnnindonesia.com/hiburan/20200303111129-220-480027/industri-film-global-diperkirakan-rugi-rp712-t-akibat-corona)
- Evans, D. (2012). *Social Media Marketing an Hour a Day* (2nd ed.). Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Evans, D., & Mckee, J. (2010). *Social Media Marketing: The Next Generation of Business Engagement*. Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Gunelius, S. (2011). *30-Minute Social Media Marketing*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hadijah, S. (2019, February 28). Retrieved from [cermati.com: https://www.cermati.com/artikel/tips-seru-membuat-konten-di-igtv](https://www.cermati.com/artikel/tips-seru-membuat-konten-di-igtv)
- Imron, A. S., Wardani, N. H., & Rokhmawati, R. I. (2018). Analisis Pengaruh Pemasaran Media Sosial Terhadap Loyalitas Konsumen: Studi Pada Transportasi Online (Go-Jek Indonesia). *Jurnal Pengembangan Teknologi Informasi dan Ilmu Komputer*, vol. 2, no. 9, 2570-2578.
- Kemp, S. (2020). Retrieved from [wearesocial.com: https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020](https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020)
- Mardiastika, E. (2012). Analisis Pengaruh Kualitas Layanan, Kualitas Film, Efek Komunitas dan Persepsi Harga terhadap Sikap Menonton dan Implikasinya terhadap Minat Menonton.
- Martanatasha, M., & Primadini, I. (2019). Relasi Self-Esteem dan Body Image dalam Terpaan Media Sosial Instagram. *Jurnal Ultimacomm*, 11(2), 158-172.
- Miles, J. (2019). *Instagram Power: Build Your Brand and Reach More Customers with Visual Influence*. USA: McGraw-Hill.
- Mukaromah, V. F. (2020, September 01). Retrieved from [kompas.com: https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2020/09/01/200200165/melihat-peningkatan-kasus-covid-19-di-indonesia-dari-bulan-ke-bulan?page=all](https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2020/09/01/200200165/melihat-peningkatan-kasus-covid-19-di-indonesia-dari-bulan-ke-bulan?page=all)
- Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Primadini, I. (2019). Social Media and Its Role in Encouraging Individual Willingness to Mobilize Against Sexual Violence in Academia. *The 1st ICA Regional Conference*. Bali: EAI. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.4108/eai.16-10-2019.2304342>
- Quesenberry, K. A. (2019). *Social Media Strategy: Marketing, Advertising and Public Relations in The Consumer Revolution*. USA: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Rohadian, S., & Amir, M. T. (2019). Upaya Membangun Customer Engagement Melalui Media Sosial Instagram: Studi Kasus Online Shop yang Menjual Produknya Sendiri. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management, and Industry*, 2(4), 179-187.

- Sarwono, J. (2012). *Metode Riset Skripsi Pendekatan Kuantitatif Menggunakan Prosedur SPSS: Tuntunan Praktis dalam Menyusun Skripsi*. Jakarta: Kompas Gramedia.
- Sashi, C. M. (2012). Customer Engagement, Buyer-Seller Relationships, and Social Media. *Journal Management*, 50(2), 253-272.
- Shihab, K. (2020, April 08). Retrieved from medium.com: <https://medium.com/@keanshihab/reconcept-cinema-21s-instagram-content-a-content-pillar-case-study-3-400ce5a2bf79>
- Sirclo. (2020, July 25). Retrieved from sirclo.com: <https://www.sirclo.com/5-alasan-kenapa-kamu-perlu-memanfaatkan-fitur-feeds-di-marketplace/>
- Smith, G. E. (2016). *The Opt-Out Effect: Marketing Strategies That Empower Consumers and Win Customer-Driven Brand Loyalty*. USA: Pearson.
- Sugiyono. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Syifa, H. (2017). Pengaruh Content Marketing Terhadap Customer Engagement: Studi pada Akun Instagram Heavenly Blush .
- Tionardus, M. (2020, June 26). Retrieved from Kompas.com: <https://www.kompas.com/hype/read/2020/06/26/181928666/bioskop-merugi-gara-gara-pandemi-begini-cara-cgv-siasati-kerugian?page=all>
- Toor, A., Husnain, M., & Hussain, T. (2017). The Impact of Social Network Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intention in Pakistan: Consumer Engagement as a Mediator. *Asian Journal of Business and Accounting*, 10(1), 167-199.
- Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Social Media Marketing* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Utami, G. R., & Saputri, M. E. (2020). Pengaruh Social Media Marketing terhadap Customer Engagement dan Loyalitas Merek pada Akun Instagram Tokopedia.
- Zyminkowska, K. (2019). *Customer Engagement in Theory and Practice: A Marketing Management Perspective*. Switzerland: Palgrave McMillan.

## When Politics and Health Collide: Selective Exposure in COVID-19 News

**Anindita Widiastuti, Kunto Adi Wibowo, Benazir Bona Pratamawaty**

Universitas Padjajaran

Email: aninditawidiastuti@gmail.com, kunto.a.wibowo@unpad.ac.id, benazir.bona@unpad.ac.id

*Received Apr. 14, 2021; Revised Jun. 16, 2021; Accepted Jun. 26, 2021*

### Abstract

Globally, COVID-19 news is highly motivated by political interests. In Indonesia, one of the reasons for political polarization is the contrast in how the COVID-19 is being dealt with by Anies as the Governor of DKI Jakarta who had suggested a lockdown to Jakarta as the capital city since the beginning of the pandemic, but is rejected by Jokowi as the President of the Republic of Indonesia who preferred the large-scale-social-restrictions policy. This study examines the effect of selective exposure in COVID-19 news in Indonesia's political context where everything is extremely polarized. Selective exposure theory where audiences will spend more time reading news that is aligned with their political attitudes is tested in the COVID-19 context in Indonesia. This experimental study employed a  $2 \times 3$  block factorial between-subjects design. A total of 216 participants are randomly assigned to groups with more politically reinforcing news, more politically challenging news, and neutral news after being priorly grouped according to their political attitudes. Experimental results showed how the participants in the group where more politically reinforcing news is available spent more time on news that supports their political attitudes. Whereas, participants in the group where more politically challenging news is available spent more time on news that contradicts their political attitudes. Discussions about information availability in a news environment and its influence to selective exposure is discussed by the end of this paper.

*Keywords: selective exposure, political polarization, COVID-19, news environment, information availability*

### INTRODUCTION

Ever since Indonesia's two first confirmed COVID-19 cases in March 2020 (Yulisman, 2020), the reported total of deaths and cases of COVID-19 kept increasing significantly. By November 2020, it has reached half of a million cases (Fachriansyah, 2020). Back in March 2020, the Governor of Jakarta, Anies Baswedan proposed a quarantine scenario of a lockdown to Jakarta as the capital city of Indonesia. This was turned down by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo who preferred the large-scale-social-restrictions policy where citizens could simply do physical distancing as a preventive measure instead (Gorbiano & Sutrisno, 2020). Aside from this response contrast, the April

2020 survey by SMRC that involved 1200 respondents found how 41% respondents such as the West Java's citizens felt as if the government's responses towards the COVID-19 pandemic is too slow. These respondents happened to come from the provinces which didn't succeed Jokowi in the 2019 election. Contrarily, in the provinces where Jokowi won the 2019 election, such as Bali, East Java, and Central Java, a total of 52% respondents felt as if the government had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic quickly enough. The contrast in the political responses made by Jokowi and Anies along with the polarized public perception became a few reasons for political polarization to amplify during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia (Warburton, 2020).

Political polarization is found by Stroud (2010) to lead to partisan selective exposure, a behavior where one selects information following one's own political predispositions. This politically-led selective behavior is not to ignore considering how Christensen, et al. (2020) found political ideology as the strongest factor in attitudes towards COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, political ideology had also been found to have a huge role in adults' attitudes and behaviors. Partisanship was found to have played a significant role in perceptual differences in the climate change issue (Kim, 2011). In another context, ideology in a study by Dulkiah (2020) is found to have a significant impact on radicalism in Indonesia. A study about the COVID-19 news coverage by Hart, et al. (2020) found more politicians appearing in newspapers compared to the scientists. The study saw the potential effect of this intense polarization in the COVID-19 news coverage to individuals' attitudes on COVID-19. Evidence ruling out the role of political ideology and the polarization in many contexts lead this study to explore partisan selective exposure in certain COVID-19 news environments in Indonesia.

Previous studies, such as from Garrett (2009) found how individuals select more opinion-reinforcing compared to opinion-challenging news. Aligning, Ardi (2019) found how partisans are more likely to disregard misinformation when it sources from the political figures that they support. Partisans tend to perceive information coming from the figures they support as high-quality information. They also tend to criticize opposing information about the figures they support. Political polarization's ability to affect individuals' attitudes is concerning. The COVID-19 situation makes it even more concerning considering how political polarization will be affecting people's attitude towards the health policies made by certain political figures (Havey, 2020). The infodemic, which provides people to read more information available online, had also been seen to threaten the international mitigation efforts on COVID-19 (Melki, 2020).

Jokowi and Anies were selected as the political figures that the participants get to choose considering the political polarization between Jokowi and Anies' supporters. The experiment is conducted online to citizens currently living in the Jakarta metropolitan area. This is considering how the daily Jakarta is crowded by the Jakarta metropolitan area's citizens which consist of citizens from the city of Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. They come to work, study, or hang out in Jakarta by the morning and go back

home in the afternoon. These individuals' lifestyles then are the one to be most affected by the health policies made by Jokowi as the central government who's located in Jakarta and Anies as the governor of Jakarta himself.

Selective exposure is not studied well enough in Indonesian samples. In a meta-analysis of selective exposure studies by Hart, et al. (2009), it was examined how 46% or most selective exposure studies with a total of 147 studies were conducted in the United States and Canada. 46% of the studies were conducted in Germany, while 3% was conducted in Australia, and only 1% was conducted in Italy. Each country adapts a distinct communication, culture, and political structure. Hence, it is required to add more studies on selective exposure in Indonesia. By studying how individuals' political attitudes may influence their health attitudes, this study will also contribute to the political communication studies (McNair, 2018) and the health communication studies (Beato & Telfer, 2010).

It's theorized how people are guided by their ideological differences when interpreting and reacting to aspects of their social and political environments (Abramowitz & Saunders, 2006; Jost, Nosek, & Gosling, 2008). These ideology differences lead individuals to adopt certain political perspectives (Alford, Funk, & Hibbing, 2005). As an effect of fundamental values on attitudes, while as opposed to an effect of identity on attitudes, one's ideologically based manner will control one stance on an issue (Boninger, Krosnick, & Berent, 1995). Therefore, one's political ideology will drive one's behavior on specific issues accordingly.

Most previous research regarding political ideology takes place in the United States, where the most discussed ideological feature has been the right versus the left, or the Conservative versus the Liberal (Malka & Lelkes, 2010). These political ideologies have become a principal reason in how citizens approach the news. These days, where the availability of news is endless, the news environment between Conservative Republicans and Liberal Democrats is entirely different. People may either pick or filter out news on topics they either align or oppose with. It's extremely easy for individuals nowadays to look for like-minded news. For example, Keith Olbermann can provide news for Liberal Democrats, while Bill O'Reilly can provide news for Conservative. This usage case of politically like-minded news can be defined as partisan selective exposure (Stroud, 2011).

Pilot understanding of selective exposure referred to Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance research. The cognitive dissonance framework has been employed in studies to see media users' preferences towards messages aligning with their personal values due to their need for consistency. Historically, the selective exposure's term has been linked to reinforcement-seeking exposure motivations. Selective exposure has been generally studied in political or health communication's context and has been mainly referred to as a preference for information that aligns with one's existing attitudes (Lazarsfeld,

Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944). In the COVID-19 context, Gadarian, et al. (2021) found how partisanship influences policy preferences as well as the health behaviors of Americans. In another study, Young and Bleakley (2020) introduced the Ideological Health Spirals Model which may be used to explain the operation of political dynamics in health behaviors context, such as towards the COVID-19.

Unlike uses-and-gratifications research where survey measures may be used to capture message exposure by assuming full awareness on media users, scientists have been arguing how users are unconscious of their motives for media selections and hence are not in a position to report their motives through survey measures. Damaged recall, as well as inaccurate response scales, are also seen to undermine self-report data's validity. To shift the problems reported on self-reports as used in uses-and-gratifications research, the selective exposure paradigm employs behavioral observation measures in capturing individuals' messages' exposure. Ideally, these observations are conducted unobtrusively in order to keep the participants of a research to be biased by the operation of the data collection. For this reason, experimental design is the most common method in selective exposure exploration (Knobloch-Westerwick, 2015).

Grounds for choices in selective exposure may vary, two of them as in Knobloch-Westerwick (2015) are concrete selection and avoidance. It is discussed how devoting one's time, and therefore selectively exposing oneself to a media content may serve to represent one's selective exposure. Hence, article selection and exposure time in seconds or percentages have been generally used to measure selective exposure. Another reason for selective choices might be for avoiding other available media content. Underlining on the avoidance behavior, selective behavior is therefore commonly found in political and health communication studies. Selectivity is concerned to be an issue in both the political and health communication context due to the lack of participation in democratic deliberations or due to the danger of disregarding relevant health information. These concerns may be helped by exposing oneself to diverse viewpoints.

A condition for selective exposure to occur is the availability of media and message choices where individuals' selectivity may be guided by their own certain attitudes which lead their choice preferences (Knobloch-Westerwick, 2015). Contents spreading in the media are escalating quickly everyday that it is essentially unlimited (Anderson, 2009). Unlike traditional media, the current media is providing audiences with a wide selection of information allowing for selectivity as the audiences tour between content sources (Webster, 2011). This availability of unlimited online news content assists individuals' selective exposure to information aligned to their prior attitudes (Stroud, Media use and political predispositions: Revisiting the concept of selective exposure, 2008), whether they'll spend more or less time reading the content.

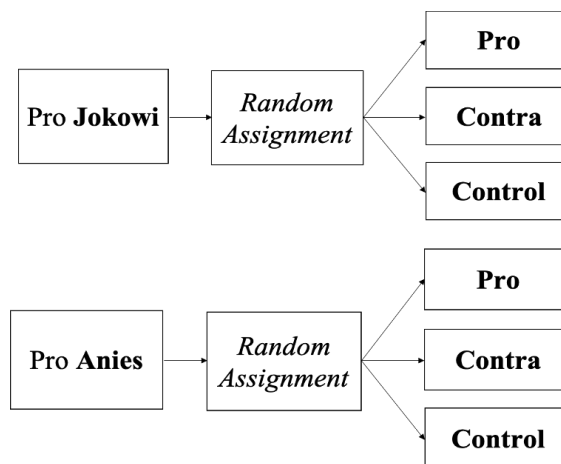
Hypothesis 1: *Time spent on politically opinion-reinforcing news varies across experimental conditions.*

Hypothesis 2: *Time spent on politically opinion-challenging news varies across experimental conditions.*

## METHOD

Using the quantitative approach, this experimental study employed a 2 (blocked : Pro Jokowi vs. Pro Anies)  $\times$  3 (experimental variables : Pro vs. Contra vs. Control) block factorial between-subjects design as described in Figure 1. The Pro Jokowi blocks consist of participants identifying their political attitudes towards Jokowi, while the Pro Anies blocks consist of participants identifying their political attitudes towards Anies. 216 participants are equally distributed and randomly assigned to experimental conditions available. The pro experimental group contains three politically reinforcing news and one politically challenging news. For Pro Jokowi blocks, politically reinforcing news are news that supports Jokowi. The news are designed to be polarized, hence the politically reinforcing news for Pro Jokowi blocks is simultaneously politically challenging news for Pro Anies blocks. The contra experimental group contains three politically challenging news and one politically reinforcing news, while the control or the neutral group contains an equal of two politically reinforcing news and two politically challenging news.

**Figure 1. The 2x3 Blocked Design**



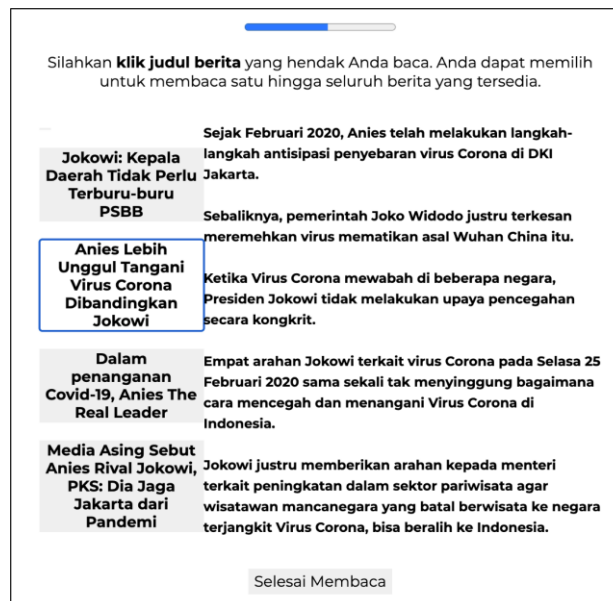
Due to the continuously alternating political situation and along with the everyday update of the COVID-19 policies, convenience sampling was used in order to get as many samples in as little span of time as possible. With an effect size of 0,38 as obtained from Hart, et al (2009), G\*Power was used to determine the minimum sample required, which was 144 samples in total. Before excluding 26 invalid data, the data collection process managed to



get 252 raw samples. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the time differences spent by participants between experimental and control groups.

The study was conducted through a designed behavior tracking web. After participants received a website link that could be accessed from a web browser on their mobile devices, they were requested for a consent, including their consent towards any kind of data collection that will be conducted. After consent was given, the experiment started by measuring their political attitudes, either towards the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo or towards the Governor of Jakarta, Anies Baswedan. The participants then were instructed to browse over the four news headlines, and choose to read whichever news they are willing to read. The content of the news will pop up once the participant has clicked on a specific headline, as illustrated in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Screenshot of The Stimuli Page**



The order of the headlines displayed on the stimuli page is randomized to a total of six positions for six random links. The stimuli page that appeared on each participant's page is according to the experimental condition they previously got assigned to. The system automatically redirected participants to the next page after 240 seconds on the stimuli page had passed. The maximum time an individual spent on the page, however, was only 203 seconds,  $M = 67$  seconds ( $SD = 0$ ). The last section of the web requested participants for their demographic data.

Each news consists of 100 words in total, with a headline of  $M = 7.83$  words ( $SD = 2.32$ ), and a body content of  $M = 92.17$  words ( $SD = 2.32$ ). To make sure that each stimulus worked as intended, it was pre-tested with 124 participants ( $M_{age} = 19.6$ ,  $SD = 4.15$ ; 33% male). "The news are more in favor of" (0 = Jokowi; 7 = Anies) were tested as a statement

put at each of the six news content. To remove any bias, the value of 0-7 was recorded without displaying the specific number to be seen by the participants examining it. The average score is between  $M = 1.18$  and  $M = 1.43$  for the “Pro Jokowi” articles and between  $M = 5.92$  and  $M = 6.14$  for the “Pro Anies” articles, as described in Table 1. As a within-group factor in a repeated-measures ANOVA, there was no significant differences in both “Pro Jokowi”,  $F(2, 228) = 1.37, p = .255, \eta^2 = .011$ , and in “Pro Anies” factor,  $F(2, 208) = 1.45, p = .238, \eta^2 = .012$ . The results verified that the stimuli functioned as planned.

**Table 1. Stimuli Test**

News Headlines	Partisan Stance	
	M	SD
<b>Pro Jokowi (Contra Anies)</b>		
<i>Jokowi: Tak Perlu Sok-sokan Lockdown</i>	1.2	1.6
<i>Jokowi: Kepala Daerah Tidak Perlu Terburu-buru PSBB</i>	1.2	1.5
<i>Karena PSBB Total, Arief Poyuono: Nonaktifkan Anies Baswedan!</i>	1.4	1.9
<b>Pro Anies (Contra Jokowi)</b>		
<i>Anies Lebih Unggul Tangani Virus Corona Dibandingkan Jokowi</i>	6.0	1.6
<i>Media Asing Sebut Anies Rival Jokowi, PKS: Dia Jaga Jakarta dari Pandemi</i>	5.9	1.7
<i>Dalam penanganan Covid-19, Anies The Real Leader</i>	6.1	1.5

The news’ headlines and contents’ level of appeal were also tested to three groups of participants (1 = very not appealing; 7 = very appealing). The first group of 69 participants ( $M_{age} = 20, SD = 1.61$ ; 33% male) tested three “Pro Jokowi” and one “Pro Anies” news’ headlines,  $F(3, 204) = 1.59, p = .193, \eta^2 = .023$ , and contents,  $F(3, 187) = .407, p = .73, \eta^2 = .006$ . The second group of 76 participants ( $M_{age} = 20, SD = 1.87$ ; 30% male) tested three “Pro Anies” and one “Pro Jokowi” news’ headlines,  $F(3, 225) = 1.6, p = .197, \eta^2 = .021$ , and contents,  $F(3, 196) = 1.07, p = .358, \eta^2 = .014$ . The third group of 71 participants ( $M_{age} = 20, SD = 2$ ; 24% male) tested two “Pro Anies” and two “Pro Jokowi” news’ headlines,  $F(3, 210) = 1.28, p = .283, \eta^2 = .018$ , and contents,  $F(3, 210) = .68, p = .567, \eta^2 = .010$ . Therefore, all of the news’ headlines and contents did not significantly differ on the level of appeal.

Participants were shown to a blank horizontal multiple choice with “Jokowi” on the left side of the multiple-choice, which was coded as one, and “Anies” on the right side of the multiple-choice which was coded as four (1 = Jokowi; 4 = Anies). Accordingly, a value of one and two were coded to identify a participant as a Pro Jokowi, while a value of four and three were coded to identify a participant as a Pro Anies.

Garrett (2009) had previously conducted a web-administered behavior-tracking study to record participants’ selective exposure behavior. This study, therefore, employed a similar web-administered behavior-tracking device to collect selective exposure data. Participants’ browsing activity on the stimuli page was tracked and the amount of time spent on each news was collected. The average time spent on each news was  $M = 24$  seconds ( $SD = 0$ ).

## RESULT

From an initial of 252 data collected, 17 data were excluded given how the participants failed to follow the instruction, where they didn’t choose any news to read, and therefore their participation can’t be used to measure their exposure behavior. 19 more data was excluded, since participants were detected to be staying outside of the Jakarta metropolitan area during the data collection, given how they may not be as affected as the people who are actually living in the Jakarta metropolitan area, where the public policy implemented by both Jokowi and Anies directly affected their work and lifestyle. These cases left the study with 216 data that were employed by participants on either their personal mobile devices such as their laptop (36.6%) or their mobile phone (63.4%).

The 216 dataset consists of participants staying in the Jakarta metropolitan area during the data collection (Jakarta (78.2%), Bogor (5.1%), Depok (1.4%), Tangerang (5.1%), and Bekasi (10.2%) with a mean age of 19.99 ( $SD = 1.82$ ), with 29.1% of male participants. 55.1% of participants are identified to be a Jokowi stance, while 44.9% are identified to be an Anies stance. The majority of 69.9% of participants had a high school degree, followed by 28.2% of participants with a bachelor’s degree. Participants’ reading frequency of online articles’ sources in the last month were calculated (0 = never; 7 = always), with the news’ portal Kompas scored  $M = 3.73$  ( $SD = 1.90$ ), Detik with  $M = 3.40$  ( $SD = 1.97$ ), Kumparan with  $M = 3.1$  ( $SD = 2.05$ ), Liputan6 with  $M = 2.63$  ( $SD = 1.92$ ), and TribunNews with  $M = 2.43$  ( $SD = 2.01$ ). Data on participant’s spending for their internet cost was collected as well, with the majority of 49.3% participants that spent less than Rp.100.000 on the internet for the last month.

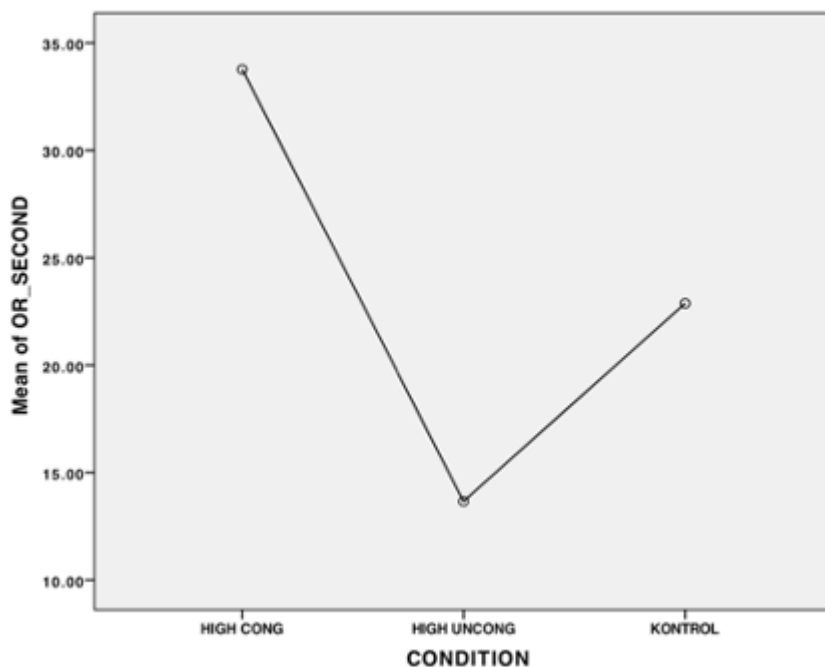
For the time spent on the pro experimental condition or the group with more politically reinforcing news, a one-way ANOVA test demonstrated a significant difference in time spent across the experimental conditions  $F(2,162) = 11$ ,  $p < .001$ . Hence, we accept the first hypothesis. For a better detail on the differences between conditions, a T-Test revealed a significant difference between the pro ( $M = 33.8$ ,  $SD = 32.75$ ) with the contra

condition ( $M = 13.7$ ,  $SD = 15.87$ ),  $t(96.103) = 4.63$ ,  $p < .001$ , as well as a significant difference between the pro ( $M = 33.8$ ,  $SD = 32.75$ ) with the control condition ( $M = 22.9$ ,  $SD = 25.5$ ),  $t(128.422) = 2.192$ ,  $p = .030$ , as well as a significant difference between the control ( $M = 22.9$ ,  $SD = 25.5$ ) with the pro condition ( $M = 13.7$ ,  $SD = 15.87$ ),  $t(115.666) = 2.609$ ,  $p = .010$ .

For the time spent on the contra experimental condition or the group with more politically challenging news, a one-way ANOVA test demonstrated a significant difference in time spent across the experimental conditions  $F(2,162) = 11$ ,  $p < .001$ . Hence, we accept the second hypothesis as well. For a better detail on the differences between conditions, a T-Test revealed a significant difference between the contra ( $M = 37.1$ ,  $SD = 44.35$ ) with the pro condition ( $M = 11.9$ ,  $SD = 15.43$ ),  $t(94.473) = 4.652$ ,  $p < .001$ , as well as between the pro ( $M = 11.9$ ,  $SD = 15.43$ ) with the control condition ( $M = 31.8$ ,  $SD = 36.6$ ),  $t(94.659) = 4.206$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, no difference was found between the pro ( $M = 13.7$ ,  $SD = 15.87$ ) with the control condition ( $M = 22.9$ ,  $SD = 25.5$ ),  $t(142.876) = .795$ ,  $p = .428$ .

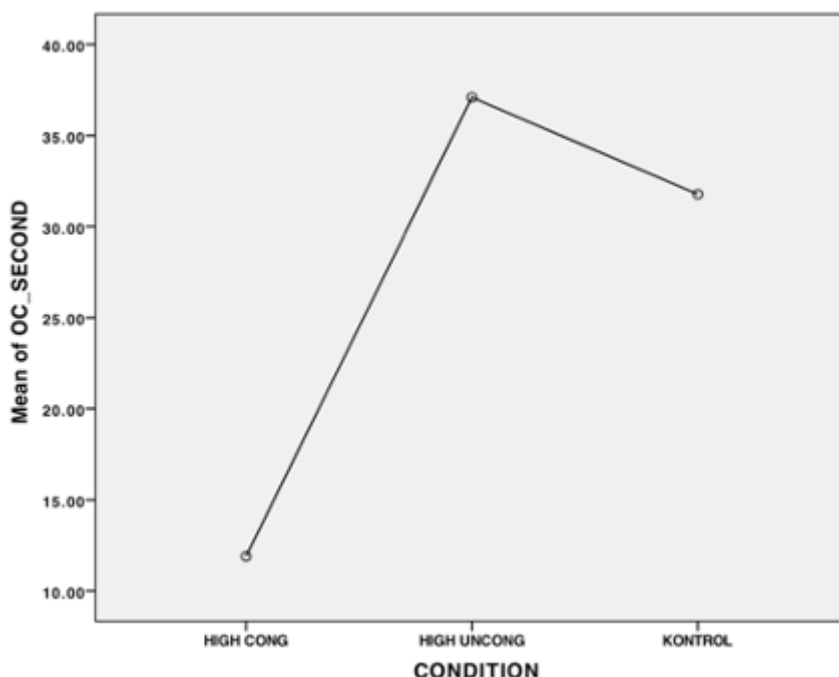
On politically reinforcing news exposure where participants exposed themselves to more opinion-reinforcing news, average of time spent by participants varies across conditions of pro ( $M = 33.8$ ,  $SD = 32.7$ ), contra ( $M = 13.7$ ,  $SD = 15.9$ ), and control ( $M = 22.9$ ,  $SD = 25.5$ ), as seen in Figure 3.

**Figure 3. Mean Plots Between the Time Spent on Opinion-Reinforcing News**



On politically challenging news exposure where participants exposed themselves to more opinion-challenging news, average of time spent by participants also varies across conditions of pro ( $M = 11.9$ ,  $SD = 15.4$ ), contra ( $M = 37.1$ ,  $SD = 44.3$ ), and control ( $M = 31.8$ ,  $SD = 36.6$ ), as seen in Figure 4.

**Figure 4. Mean Plots Between the Time Spent on Opinion-Challenging News**



## DISCUSSION

To examine the effect of selective exposure in the polarized COVID-19 news environment, this study employed the selective exposure framework where one's political attitude guides one's news exposure. It is assumed how individuals have a tendency to expose themselves to information aligned with the political values they've pre-acquainted with (Stroud, 2011). Aligning with the assumption, our data shows how most time is spent on politically reinforcing news when participants are placed in the pro condition ( $M = 33.8$ ,  $SD = 32.7$ ) where more politically reinforcing news were available. This result also aligns with the findings from Barnidge, et al. (2017) where participants spent more time on opinion-reinforcing news when supported by a supportive news environment that provided more like-minded news.

Similarly, the study by Garrett (2009) also found how individuals tend to be more interested in reading and therefore spend more time in news they expect to support their own opinion. At the same time, however, due to one's tendency to criticize others' perspectives, individuals are also contrarily found to display more interest in news against their values. This aligns with our data on politically challenging news where most time is

spent at the contra condition ( $M = 37.1$ ,  $SD = 44.3$ ) where more politically challenging news were available. No significant time difference between the seconds spent in between the contra and the control condition ( $M = 31.8$ ,  $SD = 36.6$ ) imply how participants tend to be more interested in criticizing other perspectives compared to spending time on like-minded news. This aligns with previous studies, such as by Zillmann, et al. (2004) and Meffert, et al. (2006). This also may be due to how it is more challenging to process disconfirming information (Ditto & Lopez, 1992) and therefore resulted in individuals spending more time on challenging information.

Overall, data shows how participants' political attitudes, to whomever they are leaning to, be it to Jokowi or Anies played a role in selective exposure and COVID-19 news behavior. The results where the participants in the politically reinforcing news environment spent more time in politically reinforcing news, as well as how the participants in the politically challenging news environment spent more time in politically challenging news showed how participants' exposure depends on their news environment. This aligns with the findings by Wibowo (2018) where selective exposure is also found to be affected by the news environment. The news environment is manipulated by the information availability in the experimental conditions. This denotes how information availability is a factor that may lead individuals' selective exposure behavior.

Democratic consequences of selective exposure asserts how the ideal news environment is an equal one. An equal news environment must involve an equal politically reinforcing and challenging news content. This news environment may help to open people up to broader perspectives of realities and reduce polarization-led behavior. This will help people to make wiser and non-polarized decisions towards the COVID-19 behavior. Another situation that must be taken into consideration is the fact how completely getting rid of the political polarization in the society is slightly an impossible task. However, it's only appropriate for political figures to play their role in the mitigation of the pandemic by keeping their political agendas aside and join their hands to have the same vision in supporting the COVID-19's policies.

## CONCLUSION

Selective exposure behavior on both politically reinforcing and challenging news depends on the availability of either reinforcing or challenging news in a news environment. When an individual is placed in a news environment where one is provided with more politically reinforcing news, more time would be spent on the politically reinforcing news. As well as how when an individual is placed in a news environment where one is provided with more politically challenging news, more time would be spent on the politically challenging news. A politically reinforcing news environment might lead to a better political participation. However, with limited perspectives, the people will be less-informed. To be rational, Lane & Sears (1964) mentioned how one must be open to all perspectives, which

is done by exposing oneself to an equal news environment where both opinion-reinforcing and opinion-challenging news are available. In supporting efforts towards the COVID-19 mitigation, each party, from political figures, health experts, to world leaders must be able to align their visions, keep aside their personal agendas, and act wisely in being a public guide in behaving towards the COVID-19 pandemic. Even if previous studies have ruled out the possibility of reasons for a certain selective exposure behavior, the methodology used in this study doesn't allow us to figure out the exact reason for each selective behavior. Do participants actually spend more time on challenging news because they are interested in criticizing them? Further research may also consider measuring participant's critical-thinking ability, open-mindedness, reading literacy, availability, and such before measuring their selective exposure behavior.

## REFERENCES

- Abramowitz, A. I., & Saunders, K. L. (2006). Exploring the bases of partisanship in the American electorate: Social identity vs. ideology. *Political Research Quarterly*, 59(2), 175–187.
- Alford, J. R., Funk, C. L., & Hibbing, J. R. (2005). Are political orientations genetically transmitted? *American Political Science Review*, 99(2), 153–167. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055405051579>
- Anderson, C. (2009). *Free: The future of a radical price*. New York: Hyperion.
- Ardi, R. (2019). Partisan Selective Exposure to Fake News Content. *Makara Hubs-Asia*, 23(1), 6-16. DOI:10.7454/hubs.asia.1160219
- Barnidge, M., Gunther, A. C., Kim, J., Hong, Y., Perryman, M., Tay, S. K., & Knisely, S. (2017). Politically Motivated Selective Exposure and Perceived Media Bias. *Communication Research*, 47(1), 82-103. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650217713066>
- Beato, R. R., & Telfer, J. (2010). Communication as an Essential Component of Environmental Health Science. *Journal of Environmental Health*, 73(1), 24-25.
- Boninger, D. S., Krosnick, J. A., & Berent, M. K. (1995). Origins of attitude importance: Self-interest, social identification, and value relevance. *Journal of Social and Personality Psychology*, 68(1), 61-80. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.68.1.61>
- Christensen, S. R., Pilling, E. B., Eyring, J. B., Dickerson, G., Sloan, C. D., & Magnusson, B. M. (2020). Political and personal reactions to COVID-19 during initial weeks of social distancing in the United States. *PLoS ONE*, 15(9), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239693>
- Dulkiah, M. (2020). Pengaruh Ideologi Terhadap Sikap Radikal Pimpinan Pondok Pesantren di Tasikmalaya. *Jurnal Ilmiah Nasional*, 2(3), 118-127.
- Ditto, P. H., & Lopez, D. F. (1992). Motivated skepticism: Use of differential decision criteria for preferred and nonpreferred conclusions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(4), 568–584. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.63.4.568>
- Fachriansyah, R. (2020, November 23). *The Jakarta Post*. Retrieved December 8, 2020, from Indonesia surpasses half a million coronavirus cases: <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/11/23/indonesia-surpasses-half-a-million-coronavirus-cases.html>
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Gadarian, S. K., Goodman, S. W., & Pepinsky, T. B. (2021). Partisanship, health behavior, and policy attitudes in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. *PLoS ONE*, 16(4), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0249596>



- Garrett, R. K. (2009). Echo chambers online?: Politically motivated selective exposure among Internet news users. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(2), 265-285. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01440.x>
- Gorbiano, M. I., & Sutrisno, B. (2020, March 3). *The Jakarta Post*. Retrieved December 8, 2020, from Jokowi refuses to impose lockdown on Jakarta: <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/03/30/jokowi-refuses-to-impose-lockdown-on-jakarta.html>
- Hart, P. S., Chinn, S., & Soroka, S. (2020). Politicization and Polarization in COVID-19 News Coverage. *Science Communication*, 42(5), 679-697. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1075547020950735>
- Hart, W., Albarracin, D., Eagly, A., Brechan, I., Lindberg, M., & Merrill, L. (2009). Feeling Validated Versus Being Correct: A Meta-Analysis of Selective Exposure to Information. *Psychological bulletin*, 135(4):555-88. doi: 10.1037/a0015701.
- Havey, N. F. (2020). Partisan public health: how does political ideology influence support for COVID-19 related misinformation? *Journal of Computational Social Science*. doi: 10.1007/s42001-020-00089-2
- Jost, J. T., Nosek, B. A., & Gosling, S. D. (2008). Ideology: Its resurgence in social, personality, and political psychology. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3(2), 126-136. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6916.2008.00070.x>
- Kim, K. S. (2011). Public understanding of the politics of global warming in the news media: the hostile media approach. *Public Understanding of Science*, 20(5), 690-705. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662510372313>
- Knobloch-Westerwick, S. (2015). *Choice and Preferences in Media Use*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lane, R. E., & Sears, D. O. (1964). *Public Opinion*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Lazarsfeld, P. F., Berelson, B., & Gaudet, H. (1944). *The people's choice: How the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*. New York, NY: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce.
- Malka, A., & Lelkes, Y. (2010). More than Ideology: Conservative–Liberal Identity and Receptivity to Political Cues. *Social Justice Research*, 23, 156-188. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-010-0114-3>
- McNair, B. (2018). *An introduction to political communication*. New York: Routledge. DOI: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00003.x
- Melki, J., Tamim, H., Hadid, D., Makki, M., El Amine, J., & Hitti, E. (2021). Mitigating infodemics: The relationship between news exposure and trust and belief in COVID-19 fake news and social media spreading. *PLOS ONE*, 16(6). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0252830>
- Stroud, N. J. (2011). *Niche news: The politics of news choice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Stroud, N. J. (2010). Polarization and Partisan Selective Exposure. *Journal of Communication*, 60(3), 556–576. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2010.01497.x>
- Stroud, N. J. (2008). Media Use and Political Predispositions: Revisiting the Concept of Selective Exposure. *Political Behavior*, 30(3), 341–366. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-007-9050-9>
- Warburton, E. (2020, April 28). *CARNEGIE*. Retrieved December 8, 2020, from Indonesia: Polarization, Democratic Distress, and the Coronavirus: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/04/28/indonesia-polarization-democratic-distress-and-coronavirus-pub-81641#tableContents>
- Webster, J. G. (2011). The Duality of Media: A Structural Theory of Public Attention. *Communication Theory*, 21(1), 43–66. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2010.01375.x>
- Wibowo, K. (2018). Information Availability and Congeniality, Selective Exposure, and Reinforcement Effect. [Doctoral dissertation, Wayne State University Dissertations]. [https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/oa\\_dissertations/1975/](https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/oa_dissertations/1975/)
- Young, D. G., & Bleakley, A. (2020). Ideological Health Spirals: An Integrated Political and Health Communication Approach to COVID Interventions. *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 3508–3524
- Yulisman, L. (2020, March 2). *The Straits Times*. Retrieved December 18, 2020, from Mother and daughter test positive for coronavirus in Indonesia, first confirmed cases in the country: <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/indonesia-confirms-two-coronavirus-cases-president>
- Zillmann, D., Chen, L., Knobloch, S., & Callison, C. (2004). Effects of Lead Framing on Selective Exposure to Internet News Reports. *Communication Research*, 31(1), 58–81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650203260201>

## Gender and Digital Public Relations: Who Benefits from the Advancement of the Technologies?

**Nobertus Ribut Santoso**

Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta; College of Mass Communication, University of the Philippines Diliman

Email: nobertus.ribut@uajy.ac.id

*Received Apr. 14, 2021; Revised Jun. 24, 2021; Accepted Jun. 29, 2021*

### **Abstract**

This research investigates how the advancement of digital technologies benefits for male and female public relations professionals. Through a systematic review method, this research gathers the data from relevant existing texts of public relations, genders, and digital technologies published from 1990 to 2020, with a total of 40 journals published from various publishers. After analysing, criticizing, and synthesizing, the findings show that although females dominate public relations, male public relations professionals have a privilege to dominate the top positions since they have been participated in the managerial roles while female are in the technical roles. In the organization, female public relations practitioners face inequalities in social, professional, and economic areas and they also find it difficult to achieve higher position because the traditional patriarchy is still strongly practiced. It is harder for them to break this barrier. Family and children, on the other hand, become big considerations for females to climb the higher position since it will give bigger responsibilities. Moreover, the massive development of digital technologies provides more opportunities for female public relations professionals to intensively engage with the stakeholders. On the other hand, these technologies bring privilege for males since they are more digital technical skills. This research suggested that to compete with males in digital public relations, females should enhance their digital skills, wisely manage their time, learn to take new challenges making them one step ahead, and actively participate in every organizational activity to voice their ideas and straighten up false assumptions and misconceptions about females. Meanwhile, males should be versatile public relations professionals in the digital era by combining masculine and feminine values to find the best public relations practices.

**Keywords:** digital public relations, gender discrepancy, feminine values, patriarchal system, professionalism

### **INTRODUCTION**

Females have traditionally dominated the profession of public relations. More than 70% of public relations practitioners are females (Janus, 2008). At the higher education level, 70% to 80% of students taking public relations courses are females (Grunig et al., 2000). Therefore, the public relations profession is heavily stereotyped as a feminine profession, despite the fact that many females pursue this occupation. The increased number of

females deciding to be public relations practitioners encourages a debate over this occupation's feminization since World War II. This profession's female domination occurs when many women love this profession since they feel that this profession belongs to their passion. They enjoy it because this job offers them opportunities to complete tasks (Beatty, 2013). Thus, people label the public relations profession as a feminine profession because it involves honesty, justice, and sensitivity (Andsager & Hust, 2005). These feminine values become the core of this profession, mainly when public relations activities are primarily carried out in service industries.

This article assumes the public relations profession is currently dominated by females (Beatty, 2013). As media and business industries develop, public relations professionals become increasingly important because of their ability to cultivate friendly relationships with any parties (public, stakeholders, businesses, and other organizations). Therefore, the feminization of public relations has only favored females for they have good communication skills (Beatty, 2013). They serve to harmonize the relationships with all stakeholders. For organizations needing public relations professionals to harmonize the relationships with stakeholders and make up the organization to have a good image, placing females in this occupation could be the right choice. A good image determines the organization's success in the midst of business competition (Lovis, 2020).

Although women in the workplace dominate this profession, some scholars reported that female public relations professionals are still facing institutional sexism; a system of unfair advantages that are given exclusively to men (Grunig et al., 2013, p.3). Overcoming this problem remains a significant challenge since the patriarchal system is still intensely practiced. Furthermore, females experience vast gender inequalities in social, professional, and economic areas (Beatty, 2013). The patriarchal system might contribute to these inequalities since most organization leaders are males.

Public relations could be then said as a gendered field (Daymon & Demetrious, 2010). Gender refers to complex systems of personal and social relations through which men and women are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to, or are located, status, power, and material; resources within the society (Barriteau, 1994). Gender also refers to the characteristics that either society or culture tends to symbolize roles of each sex as masculine or feminine, which influences personal identities (Little et al., 2016). Therefore, as a profession, public relations are a social construction product driving how public relations professionals should behave based on their attributes as public relations professionals. These attributes guide them in performing their behaviours.

Although society constructs the profession of public relations as a feminine occupation since it is dominated by females, in terms of professional, male public relations practitioners achieve higher positions in the organization (Krugler, 2017). They could reach manager and director levels. Therefore, since males dominate the higher level of

public relations, it can be said that the higher the position of public relations, the more masculine of the public relations practices can be found. This assumption is based on the construction of power and patriarchy (Douglas, 2012), where males dominate society through their power. Through power, they can control and make decisions bringing advantages to males.

On the other hand, a massive development of digital technologies brings challenges for male and female public relations professionals to adopt these technologies in their works. These platforms have changed the way they communicate with their stakeholders. The communication tends to be dynamic, and through their fingertips, public relations professionals and their stakeholders are intensively connected. Public relations professionals could produce creative and exciting content and upload them on websites and social media accounts, while stakeholders could directly experience those contents and respond to the contents. Digital platforms have the potential to significantly increase stakeholder engagement. As a result, when it comes to public relations and digital technologies, the question of who benefits from the advancement of these technologies may arise.

## **METHODS**

The literature review was chosen in this study since it helps the researcher in summarizing tremendous literature around a concept or phenomenon (Snyder, 2019). This study, on the other hand, followed an integrative literature review. Snyder (2019) also cited that the integrative literature review aims “to provide an overview of the knowledge base, to critically review and potentially reconceptualize, and to expand on the theoretical foundation of the specific topic as it develops”. Therefore, it allowed the researcher to capture data from various related fields, but not to cover all journals that have been ever published on the topic. The researcher combined different perspective from the various articles to establish new insights.

Relevant existing texts of public relations, gender, and digital technologies were reviewed to identify how public relations and gender is discussed and who get benefits from the development of digital technologies in doing public relations activities. In identifying the related journals, the researcher employed Google Scholar. The researcher took a range of published articles from 1990 to 2020 for the desk research study. There were 40 journals published from various publishers. After identifying the relevant texts, the researcher analyzed, critiqued, and synthesized them to get in-depth insights in meaning-making information that is relevant to this study. Then, the researcher presented the findings and discussed them in order to answer the purpose of this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In understanding public relations' social construction, it is essential to examine its gendered nature (Daymon & Demetrious, 2010). Gender is formed based on social construction (Juschka, 2001). Discussing gender cannot be separated from sex. Although gender is different from sex, it has a strong relationship. People are born as males and females, but they learn to be, are conditioned to be, or feel themselves to be "feminine" or "masculine" (Rolleri, 2013). Meanwhile, sex refers to a biological reality of male and female sexual difference (Juschka, 2001), for instance, chromosomes, internal and external reproductive organs, hormones, and specific physical characteristics (Rolleri, 2013). Therefore, gender is dynamic. Masculine and feminine values in a particular community could differ from other communities depending on their perspectives and experiences on gender.

Socially and culturally, masculinities are awarded over and above femininities (Sultana, 2010). This phenomenon causes gender inequality in the organization where managerial work acts as a reinforcement of men and women into traditional gender roles. As a result, females hold a lower position in the hierarchy of the structure. Therefore, they earn lower wages than males (Zwiech, 2009). Lacking professional experience, manager role enactment, participation in decision-making, and career specialization drive women to be a second class in the organization (Dozier, Sha, and Shen in Krugler, 2017). Also, people assume that males are more productive than females (Zwiech, 2009). Consequently, this stereotype becomes a significant consideration for the organization to hire males since they will benefit the organization. Zwiech also (2009) argued that males are more productive than females. It could explain that males enjoy their privilege in social society in the hierarchical structure. They get more benefits of the virtue of their gender since it seems no barriers for them to pursue their dreams. Thus, in the organization, males get more opportunities to develop their career.

Regarding gender issues, society labels which occupation is considered more appropriate to males and females based on its attributes. The society opined that males identify to work at heavy industries, constructions, army institutions, transportations, economics, sales, and commerce. Simultaneously, females are better to work in areas of personal care services, education, secretarial or office work, nursing, caretaking, marketing, Public Relations (PR), and Human Resource (HR). These stereotypes are based on the dominated gender in the work areas that require skills and characteristics traditionally attributed to men and women (Andsager & Hust, 2005). Therefore, people identify public relations as an occupation for females because this profession's characteristics are feminine (Beatty, 2013).

The profession of public relations, on the other hand, is a result of a social construction formed by society. This construction has impacts on power relations and privilege for

both males and females (Daymon & Demetrious, 2010). Wherever their position in the organization's structure, both males and females have the authority to complete their tasks. However, the authority that they have is different based on the position they can achieve. Male public relations professionals' authority in the organization is more extensive than females since males have privilege opportunities to achieve higher levels, particularly in the patriarchal organization. Most male public relations can achieve higher positions in the organization, such as managers and directors of public relations.

Gender issues in public relations refer to what males and females should do in this profession (Tsetsura, 2014). Digital public relations, precisely gender issues, relate to digital public relations activities. Based on the job descriptions, generally, there are no differences between male and female public relations practitioners. They conduct their job based on job descriptions given by the organization. However, gender issue on public relations derives the inequality coming from career roles, salary, advancement opportunities, and sexual discrimination and harassment (Grunig et al., 2013, p.4-5). In the roles of males and females in the organization, females put more in technical roles rather than in managerial roles (Toth & Grunig, 1993). Also, female public relations professionals do not get involved in making business strategies. They focus more on activities dealing with customers. Therefore, female public relations practitioners have less opportunity to use their talents and abilities in creating successful relations with the media and various publics (Beatty, 2013). Meanwhile, male public relations practitioners perform more on managerial tasks. Thus, they get more opportunities to advance their positions (Grunig et al., 2013, p.2) since they participate in making organizational decisions to compete with others and win markets.

Gender issues in public relations also bring impacts on how people see this profession. The stereotype of public relations is presented as a profession that is enjoyable, easy, and dependent. These are attributed to femininity (Tsetsura, 2014). Consequently, these stereotypes cause prejudice toward public relations professionals. People then assume that this occupation does not constitute a real career (Beatty, 2013). However, females now dominate this profession since more females are interested in entry this profession. They argue that this profession offers them opportunities to be creative, communicative, and emotional of listening, serving to counsel, and dealing with problems and able to enhance writing skills, build networks, and do multi-tasking job (Beatty, 2013).

The domination of females in this profession should ideally bring advantages for females since the domination can hold legitimation over the population (Thompson, 2013). However, female domination of public relations cannot strengthen their bargaining in the organization. This domination precisely becomes a barrier to achieve a higher position because of the patriarchy. The more females enter this occupation, the weaker their position will be, creating a gender pay gap. Krugler (2017) pointed out that females' domination in the public relations profession (around 70%) gives direct impact on



income. More than a half of them earn less than males. Also, the inequality of public relations professionals drives sexual discrimination and harassment. Some female public relations professionals are being sexually harassed by males in their office. Ironically, females' appearance becomes a critical determinant in this harassment. People assumed that attractive females could not work hard, and men feel uncomfortable around attractive women since they cannot concentrate (Grunig et al., 2013, p.321).

The gender gap in public relations will be existing in line with the trends of increasing females in this occupation (Daymon & Demetrious, 2010). This gender discrepancy has disadvantageous impacts on females in terms of the wage gap, job security, mentoring opportunities, and influence in departments (Tench, 2017). Thus, females become the victims of this trend. They do not have efforts to fight this discrepancy since they might accept their discretion as females under masculinity hegemony.

On the other hand, the dramatic development of digital technology impacts how male and female public relations communicate with their stakeholders to build good relationships with them. However, since technology is closely related to males' life, some scholars opined that males' access to digital technology is better than females. Also, males' digital skills are more advanced than females (Andok, 2019; Helsper & Van Deursen, 2015). These facts could provide more opportunities to males to pursue public relations professionals and advance their careers since they can make enormous contributions to the organization through their digital technology skills. To compete with males, female public relations professionals should enhance their digital skills to have equal digital competencies. Therefore, empowering females to have digital capabilities is crucial in this digital era in order to be equal with males (Suwana, 2017).

Public relations can be understood as a distinctive management function that helps establish and maintain mutual communication lines, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and its publics. Therefore, public relations professionals are crucial in the organization since it involves managing problems or issues, helping management keep informed on and responsive to public opinion. Public relations professionals emphasize management's responsibility to serve the public interest (Seitel, 1995, p. 6). To understand its public, public relations should be active and dynamic. Therefore, there are four specific public relations functions: research, action, communication, and evaluation (Seitel, 1995, p.7).

Public Relations (PR) plays pivotal roles in the organization for it has functioned as a management to develop and support the organization's business strategy. Therefore, PR can help the organization achieve its objectives effectively and efficiently and create and maintain the image and minimize and manage the organization's conflict (Grunig & Dozier, 2003, p. 2). Also, PR is functioned to communicate the organization in order to be well-known by public through unique and interesting stories (Santoso & Negoro, 2019).



Those concepts of public relations can be highlighted that communication skills become essential factors required to be public relations practitioners because they must maintain good relationships with the public, maintain and enhance the reputation of the organization, and solve the problems or crises faced by the organization. Also, public relations professionals should have analytical skills to understand the stakeholders and plan communication goals, particularly in the digital age. They should not only be able to use digital media to maintain and enhance the reputation of the organization, but they must understand digital media strategies to optimize in disseminating messages to the public, manage a crisis, and clarify misinformation.

Digital public relations, on the other hand, can be understood as online activities conducted by public relations professionals. These activities aim to inform stakeholders about an organization's services and updated information regarding the services. Therefore, public relations professionals' contents should attract and increase visitors to the organization's website and its official social media account. Besides, digital public relations professionals should make strategies to optimize the use of websites and social media to engage stakeholders and enormously increase the highest ranking in search engines (Gifford, 2010). Therefore, digital public relations professionals are also functioned to virtually manage and enhance the organization's image and reputation.

On the other hand, by profession, "considered as a reasonably well-defined occupation that meets a defensible set of criteria for being a profession" (Lester, 2015), public relations occupation is more appropriate to and dominated by females since they are great communicators, having good abilities in persuading and engaging in a conversation. Females also have a strong mentality in listening to their publics. In terms of negotiation, females are much better negotiators than males because they can compromise with the public without yielding their position. Besides, this occupation requires attention to detail and a step-by-step ability to follow a plan that could be more appropriate to females (Tsetsura, 2014).

It is also interesting to note that by profession, females dominate the profession of public relations. It can be revealed that most members of the biggest public relations profession association, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), are females. Melgin (2012) noted that in 2011, the share of females in PRSA was 71%. The traits of this profession can attract females to involve in this job. Therefore, this profession is feminine oriented since this profession is based on feminist values where honesty, justice, and sensitivity become the essential parts, which will enhance the symmetrical communication patterns of public relations (Grunig et al., 2000). Other feminine values such as cooperation, respect, caring, nurturance, interconnection, equity, perceptiveness, intuition, altruism, fairness, morality, and commitment also attract more females to pursue this profession (Grunig et al., 2000).

Although by profession, nowadays public relations profession is more appropriate to females, males have opportunities to pursue this profession. Males should be versatile public relations professionals, particularly those working in service industries. Males must be able to understand when they must use their masculine values in working and when they must absorb feminine values and combine their masculine values with feminine values to find the best practices of public relations activities.

On the other hand, discussion of the profession of public relations cannot be separated from its professionalism. Professionalism can be defined as "an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually-, and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice" (Evans, 2002, p.6-7). Based on this concept, both male and female public relations practitioners can show their professionalism of practicing public relations activities to achieve the organization's goals. However, in terms of professionalism in achieving a higher position of public relations, females get barriers. The biggest challenge is their family. They get difficulties climbing higher levels because they have to consider their time with their family (Janus, 2008). Females also feel fear when they have a higher position in the organization because it will impact their children (Krugler, 2017). Therefore, being feminine females becomes a significant consideration rather than competing with males. This way could lead them to achieve higher self-esteem where the culture requires them to follow feminine values (Starr & Zubriggen, 2017). To be equal with males, female public relations professionals should wisely manage their time, learn to take new challenges that can make them move one step ahead, and actively participate in every organizational activity to straighten up false assumptions and misconceptions about females.

Therefore, by professionalism, this occupation is also dominated by females and they function as a glass ceiling within the field. Females tend to stop on their way to the top because they get difficulties achieving the top positions (Kridler & Ross, 1997). Moreover, in the organization, they lack opportunities and get prevented from obtaining promotions and get placed into management positions. On the other hand, working as public relations practitioners encourages considerable efforts to be a barrier for females. This job requires an inevitable sacrifice. The higher up one goes, the more sacrifice one makes (Janus, 2008); since working as public relations practitioners, one has to be ready 24 hours to prevent or solve problems faced by the organization and take beneficial opportunities that can be valuable for the organization.

Since male public relations can achieve higher positions in the organization, they have the power to control the organization, and they are also able to control female employees since they have the ability to produce planned and predicted effects on others (Domhoff, 2012). With the power that male public relations practitioners have, especially when they are in management positions, they can influence others to follow the strategic plans they

have made by considering three leading indicators such as 1) who benefits? 2) who governs? and 3) who wins? (Domhoff, 2012). Therefore, male public relations practitioners having the most power get benefits because power in the organization represents the structure or position. The more powerful they have and the higher position they achieve, the more money they get. Also, their advanced digital skills can enhance their power. With power, they manage the organization to achieve the goals. If they are successful, they win. This situation will strengthen their bargaining positions in the organization.

Gender differences derive from males and females' issues and masculinity and femininity, where males are constructed to be masculine and females to be feminine. Gender issues also go into the public relations profession. In the early development of public relations, this profession is masculine, where males dominate this occupation. In 1973, Umeogo and Ifeoma (2012) noted that there are more male than female public relations practitioners.

Furthermore, masculinity has enormous impacts on public relations in male domination. It can be seen from at least two males who have given significant contributions to this occupation's development. Edward Bernays (1891), the pioneer leading dialogue of public relations, is well-known as a public relations counsel. Another public relation figure contributing to the development of this profession is Ivy Lee. If Bernay contributes to the public relations field and practice, Lee (1877), an ex-reporter, is the first practitioner of a modern-style public relations practice. In conducting public relations activities, those two males focus on publicity and media relations (Newsom et al. in Beatty, 2013). Therefore, in the early development of public relations, this profession functioned to inform any information from organization to public since the communication flow is one-way where the public is passive.

The masculinity of public relations can also be seen from the practice of public relations in World War I. It is practiced in the form of propaganda in order to demonstrate effective persuasion, dealing with other countries (Newsom et al. in Beatty, 2013). Therefore, masculinity takes a pivotal role in developing public relations practice in this period since war is identified as a male area.

The domination of public relations practitioners changed in around 1950-1960 since females are able to enter this job. The number of females entering this occupation massively increased. In 1950, there were only 1,958 female public relations professionals, while in 1980, there were 68,595 (Reskin & Roos, 1990, p.134). Many colleges and universities opening public relations classes become a fundamental reason why females dominate the profession of public relations. Lamme (2007) noted that in 1956, ninety-two colleges and universities were offering public relations classes and most students were females. Therefore, the practice of public relations is more feminine because of the

feminine values embedded in this profession--public relations deals with interaction with the publics.

Since communication technology connecting to the world was founded in 1980, public relations have become a popular profession for the development of business and organizations (Beatty, 2013). Although the number of male public relations practitioners is fewer than females, male public relations practitioners are able to move into CEO slots while females cannot achieve this position. Most female public relations practitioners hold lower positions and earn less than males even though they are in the same position (Newsom et al. in Beatty, 2013). The ability in mastering digital technology contributes to males to achieve higher levels in the organization since digital media has changed the way organization communicates with its stakeholders.

Originally, masculinity influences the improvement of public relations. However, femininity gives contributions to the practice of this profession. Questioning on if males or females are more appropriate to this occupation has already answered. Both males and females can do this occupation since the public relations profession is fluid and digital public relations. On the other hand, questioning what males should do when entering this profession where females dominate it becomes an interesting question. In order to be able to conduct this occupation, males should adjust their behavior to fit in with females and demolish adverse feminization trend effects (Pompper & Jung, 2013). Thus, males should follow the feminine values of public relations. However, they could also combine feminine values with their masculine values to find other best public relations practices, complaint handling. When male public relations professionals face complaints from their stakeholders, either the complaints are expressed through face-to-face or mediated communication, feminine values play essential roles in understanding the problems to empathize with the stakeholders. In making decisions or solutions to the stakeholders' problems, male public relations professionals could confidently use their masculine values. The decisions or solutions should be firm and logical.

Historically any profession is mainly dominated by males. The construction of power and patriarchy influences the professional domain. Males have the power to determine legitimation and create organizations and systems reflecting dominant interests (Douglas, 2012). Therefore, males dominate the higher levels of the organization, including public relations.

On the other hand, it is harder for female public relations practitioners to break the boundaries of patriarchy in order to be equal with males since males have dominated public and private spheres. Patriarchy gives absolute priority to males and limits females' human rights. Therefore, females' position is always lower than males (Sultana, 2010), and females are oppressed by men (Ademiluka, 2018). To gain the power, female public relations must have excellent capabilities in the profession of digital public relations. They

must also master the use of digital technologies, work harder to get promoted, and wisely manage their time both for the organization and family.

Furthermore, females are subordinate, and the subordination of females forces them to stay under the control of males. In keeping females and males' control, patriarchy operated and hegemonized some social customs, traditions, and social roles (Sultana, 2010). Patriarchy in digital public relations works through actions and behaviors expected of organizational culture. Since hierarchically males have higher positions, they have the authority to set the organizational culture that can control the employees' activities and behaviors to achieve the organization's goals digitally.

Traditional patriarchy brings males to the top position in society. Position automatically goes to the power. Although the number of male public relations practitioners is fewer than females, males have more power since they achieve a higher structure (Umeogu & Ifeoma, 2012). In other words, the status of one determines his power. Status can be defined as either professional through the kind of job one does or hierarchically through the position one occupies in the organization (Robin in Umeogu and Ifeoma (2012). Since females' status in the patriarchy is lower than males, it impacts their power. They might only do technical activities of digital public relations. They could not have opportunities to do strategic digital public relations activities since males dominate higher levels in the organization.

Male public relations practitioners with higher status will contribute to the organization to achieve the organization's business goals. Thus, as males, they might maintain practicing their patriarchy. Although there are more female public relations practitioners, patriarchy keeps going strong. Besides, females find it hard to be equal to male to get better positions since the media portrays female public relations practitioners as "corporate prostitutes" to attract customers (Umeogu & Ifeoma, 2012). However, males might adopt feminine values and combine them with masculine values to find public relations best practice.

Regarding the digital public relations activities, females use digital media, particularly social media, more than males (Kimbrough et al., 2013; Perrin, 2015); this situation could bring opportunities for female public relations to engage with the stakeholders intensively. They can give updated information to the stakeholders and personally communicate with them to deeply understand their stakeholders before making communication programs. On the other hand, since males have higher digital technical skills than females (Dodel & Mesch, 2018), the profession of public relations could provide more opportunities for males to pursue it. Through their digital technical skills, males can advance the organization's websites and other social media official accounts to a higher rank in Google search engine.

It is also interesting to note that male public relations professional should be versatile in the digital era. They must be able to adjust to any changing environment. Having masculine values in the domination of feminine values should be the most advantageous for males to enrich their digital public relations activities. On the other hand, females should enhance their digital competencies to be quale with males' digital skills. Therefore, leaders of the organization might give equal opportunities for male and female public relations professionals to achieve the highest levels of their career in digital public relations.

## **CONCLUSION**

Females have traditionally dominated the public relations profession. They are hired because they have strong communication skills and the ability to persuade, converse with, and listen to stakeholders in order to build and harmonize relationships with them. Male public relations practitioners, on the other hand, dominate at the top because they have held managerial positions, whereas females have held technical positions. Female public relations practitioners face some inequalities in social, professional, and economic areas. They also struggle to advance in the organization because traditional patriarchy is still prevalent. Furthermore, as digital technologies advance, female public relations professionals will have more opportunities to engage in intensive stakeholder engagement. Males, on the other hand, have an advantage because they have more digital technical skills. Females must improve their digital skills, learn to manage their time wisely, learn to take on new challenges, and actively participate in all organizational activities to voice their ideas and correct false assumptions and misconceptions about females in order to compete with males in digital public relations. Meanwhile, in the digital age, men should be versatile public relations professionals who combine masculine and feminine values in order to find the best public relations practices.

Although this article does not provide empirical data, it has offered a starting point in providing a solid foundation of male and female public relations professionals in the development of digital technologies. The scholars could further investigate this topic by providing empirical data in order to deeply understand how male and female public relations professionals adjust the advancement of digital technologies supporting their public relations activities. For human resource officers, this study could be a consideration whether they will hire male or female public relations professionals in order to achieve the success of the organization.

## REFERENCE

- Ademiluka, S. O. (2018). Patriarchy and women abuse: Perspectives from ancient Israel and Africa. *Old Testament Essays*, 31(2), 339-362.
- Andok, M. (2019). Gender differences in digital media usage among Hungarian religious community members. *ESSACHESS-Journal for Communication Studies*, 12(24), 39-60.
- Andsager, J. L., & Hust, S. J. (2005). Differential gender orientation in public relations: Implications for career choices. *Public Relations Review*, 31(1), 85-91.
- Barriteau, V. E. (1994). *Gender and development planning in the post-colonial Caribbean: Female entrepreneurs and the Barbadian state*. (Doctoral dissertation, Howard University).
- Beatty, T. U. F. (2013). *A historical and analytical study of feminization in the field of public relations*. 33. incomplete reference entry. (Thesis, Southeastern University). Retrieved from <https://firescholars.seu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1023&context=honors>
- Daymon, C., & Demetrious, K. (2010). Gender and public relations: Perspectives, applications and questions. *PRism*, 7(4), 1-8.
- Dodel, M., & Mesch, G. (2018). Inequality in digital skills and the adoption of online safety behaviors. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(5), 712-728.
- Domhoff, G. W. (2012). Class-dominance theory of power. *Who Rules America*. Retrieved from [http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/class\\_domination.html](http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/class_domination.html)
- Douglas, J. (2012). Power, patriarchy and the professions. Retrieved from <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.495.2980&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Evans, L. (2002). *Reflective practice in educational research*. A&C Black.
- Gifford, J. (2010). Digital Public Relations: E-Marketing's Big Secret. *Continuing Higher Education Review*, 74, 62-72.
- Grunig, J. E., & Dozier, D. M. (2003). *Excellent public relations and effective organizations: A study of communication management in three countries*. Routledge.
- Grunig, L. A., Hon, L. C., & Toth, E. L. (2013). *Women in public relations: How gender influences practice*. Routledge.
- Grunig, L. A., Toth, E. L., & Hon, L. C. (2000). Feminist values in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 12(1), 49-68. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1201\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1201_4)
- Helsper, E. J., & Van Deursen, A. J. A. M. (2015). Digital skills in Europe: Research and policy. *Digital divides: The new challenges and opportunities of e-inclusion*, 195, 125.
- Janus, J. M. (2008). *Gender, leadership and public relations*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri--Columbia). Retrieved from <https://mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10355/5768/research.pdf?sequence=3>
- Juschka, D. (Ed.). (2001). *Feminism in the Study of Religion*. A&C Black.
- Kimbrough, A. M., Guadagno, R. E., Muscanell, N. L., & Dill, J. (2013). Gender differences in mediated communication: Women connect more than do men. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 896-900.



- Krider, D. S., & Ross, P. G. (1997). The experiences of women in a public relations firm: A phenomenological explication. *The Journal of Business Communication* (1973), 34(4), 437-453. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F002194369703400407>
- Krugler, E. (2017). Women in public relations: The influence of gender on women leaders in public relations. (Graduate Theses and Dissertations, Iowa State University). Retrieved from <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6562&context=etd>
- Lamme, M. O. (2007). Outside the prickly nest: revisiting doris fleischman. *American Journalism*, 24(3), 85-107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08821127.2007.10678080>
- Lester, S. (2015). On professions and being professional. Retrieved December, 14, 2012 from [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stan\\_Lester/publication/282869060\\_On\\_professions\\_and\\_being\\_professional/links/5620d1cf08aed8dd19408501/On-professions-and-being-professional.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Stan_Lester/publication/282869060_On_professions_and_being_professional/links/5620d1cf08aed8dd19408501/On-professions-and-being-professional.pdf)
- Little, W., McGivern, R., & Kerins, N. (2016). Introduction to Sociology-2nd Canadian Edition. BC Campus.
- Lovis, K. (2020). Public Relations Activity in Maintaining Image in Financial Technology Industries. *Ultimacomm: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 12(2), 285-300. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31937/ultimacomm.v12i2.1639>.
- Melgin, E. (2010). Gender imbalance: why is the female-dominated PR industry still led by men? [www.ipra.org](http://www.ipra.org). Retrieved from <https://www.ipra.org/news/itle/gender-imbalance-why-is-the-female-dominated-pr-industry-still-led-by-men/>
- Perrin, A. (2015). Social media usage. *Pew research center*, 125, 52-68.
- Pompper, D., & Jung, T. (2013). "Outnumbered yet still on top, but for how long?" Theorizing about men working in the feminized field of public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 39(5), 497-506. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.08.007>
- Reskin, B. F., & Roos, P. A. (1990). *Job queues, gender queues: Explaining women's inroads into male occupations*. Temple University Press.
- Rolleri, L. A. (2013). Understanding gender and gender equality. *Research Facts and Findings*. Retrieved from [http://www.actforyouth.net/resources/rf/rf\\_gender1\\_1213.pdf](http://www.actforyouth.net/resources/rf/rf_gender1_1213.pdf)
- Santoso, N. R., & Negoro, S. H. (2019). Public relations and tourism: finding public relations' role in communicating tourist destination. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 3(2), 138-150.
- Seitel, F. P. (1995). *The practice of public relations*. Prentice Hall
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333-339.
- Starr, C. R., & Zurbruggen, E. L. (2017). Sandra Bem's gender schema theory after 34 years: A review of its reach and impact. *Sex Roles*, 76(9), 566-578.
- Sultana, A. (2010). Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis. *Arts Faculty Journal*, 1-18.
- Suwana, F. (2017). Empowering Indonesian women through building digital media literacy. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 38(3), 212-217.



- Tench, R. (2017). One Step Forward, Two Steps Back? An Analysis of European PR Practitioners' Views on the Position of Women in the PR Industry (2009-2015). *Current Politics and Economics of Europe*, 28(1).
- Thompson, M. J. (2013). A functionalist theory of social domination. *Journal of Political Power*, 6(2), 179-199.
- Toth, E. L., & Grunig, L. A. (1993). The missing story of women in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 5(3), 153-175.
- Tsetsura, K. (2014). Constructing Public Relations as a Women's Profession IN Russia/Construyendo las relaciones públicas como una profesión de mujeres en Rusia. *Revista Internacional de Relaciones Públicas*, 4(8), 85-110.
- Umeogu, B., & Ifeoma, O. (2012). Gender domination in Nigerian public relations. *Advances in Applied Sociology*, 2(02), 149.
- Zwiech, P. (2009). Discrimination against women in professional life in chosen pro-feminist theories. *Economics and Sociology*, 2(1), 96-104. <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2009/2-1/9>

## The Use of Auto base Accounts on Twitter as a Media for Sharing Opinions: Case Study of @collegemenfess Account

**Risma Hasna Dwiwina, Kinkin Yuliaty Subarsa Putri**

Universitas Negeri Jakarta

Email: Rismahsnd@gmail.com, kinkinsubarsa@unj.ac.id

*Received May 14, 2020; Revised Apr. 20, 2021, ; Accepted Jun. 4, 2021*

### Abstract

*Almost everyone in the world currently uses social media. Social media can make it easier for humans to communicate, interact, discuss, and exchange opinions with its various types and functions. One of the most widely used social media is Twitter. With its features, Twitter makes it easy for users to interact and communicate. Twitter is now not only used by government and celebrity accounts but also auto base accounts. The auto base account has also caught the attention of Twitter users because it allows anonymous messaging. The account can be a medium for Twitter users to channel the same likes in a community and a medium for discussing and sharing opinions. One of the auto base accounts on Twitter that is widely used as a medium for discussing and sharing opinions is the @collegemenfess account. This account is intended for students, and can be used to share opinions with each other. The phenomenon of auto base and its use has attracted researchers to find out how to use an auto base as a medium for sharing opinions. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with content analysis on the @collegemenfess auto base account. The analysis results show that @collegemenfess auto base users use this account as a medium for sharing opinions. The researcher concludes that sharing opinions is done through the menfess sent, as well as through comments related to an issue that is being discussed on the @collegemenfess account.*

*Keywords: Auto Base, menfess, Social media, Twitter, Opinion.*

### INTRODUCTION

In this era, social media has become an integral part of society and is used by almost the entire world's population. Statista.com released that in 2019, there were around 2.95 billion social media users worldwide, and social media users are constantly growing every year. In 2020, social media users increased by 49 per cent. Furthermore, in 2023, it is predicted that there will be around 3.43 billion social media users in the world (*Number of social media users worldwide 2010-2021 | Statista*, n.d.). Meanwhile, from Datareportal.com, it is known that in Indonesia, there are around 175.4 million active social media users in 2020 (*Digital 2020: Indonesia — DataReportal – Global Digital Insights*, n.d.).

Social media itself is defined as internet-based media, which can be in the form of applications or websites. This media allows users to connect and interact with anyone, both those who already know each other and those who do not (Obar & Wildman, 2015). Mike and Young expressed another opinion. They argue that social media is a form of merging or integrating personal communication shared with other individuals. This integration is carried out personally with public media. In social media, users can communicate with anyone and share without any special individual. Social media is user-generated content (UGC), meaning that its users generate content. With social media, activities can be carried out in two directions: various exchanges, communication, collaboration through visuals, writings, and even audio-visuals (Agustina, 2018).

Social media is widely used by the community and even becomes a necessity due to the use of the social media function itself. In addition to having a function to interact and communicate, social media also has other functions. Susanto stated that social media has the function of social interaction, changing direction and forms of communication, and motivation for democratising information (Susanto, 2017). Furthermore, Alexis S. Tan opines that social media has other functions besides communication. Alexis explained that social media has information functions, educational functions, persuasion, and entertainment (Nurdin et al., 2013).

Social media exists and develops in various forms. Nasrullah categorises social media based on their form, namely 1) Social networks, such as messaging applications; 2) Blogs, for example, Blogspot sites; 3) Microblog or blog on a small scale, such as Twitter; 4) Content sharing media, for example, YouTube and Instagram; 5) Content bookmarks, e.g. Reddit; 6) Shared media, for example, Wikipedia, where other users can edit and collaborate to create content (Febrina Sukmaningtyas, 2017).

One of the most widely used types of social media is microblogs such as Facebook and Twitter. Twitter is a social media with many users in Indonesia. Based on data from PT Bakrie Telecom quoted by [kominfo.go.id](http://kominfo.go.id), Twitter users in Indonesia in 2019 had reached 19.5 million out of 500 million global users. In addition, Twitter has also become one of the largest social media globally (*Kementerian Komunikasi Dan Informatika*, n.d.). Twitter was first launched on 13 July 2006 (Mostafa, 2013). The primary use of Twitter is to upload short blogs via web pages or applications. Uploads on Twitter are called tweets. Just like other social media, Twitter is used by its users for various things. Because it can be said to be based on SMS (Short Message Service), Twitter is mostly used to share thoughts, views, and opinions in written form called tweets.

Twitter is increasingly popular among people today, especially in Indonesia. One of the things that are often found on Twitter Indonesia is an auto base account. An auto base account is an account that uses the auto direct message service feature. This feature allows other Twitter users to send DM (direct messages) to the auto base account, and later the DM will be uploaded automatically into tweets from the auto base account (Syam & Maryani, 2019). Each auto base account has its own focus or theme. For example, the @womenfeeds account is all about women, like make-up and self-care. In addition, there is also the @indomymenfess account which is a forum for the Korean

boyband fan community, BTS. Then, there is also the @collegemenfess account which is dedicated to students. The @collegemenfess account is a medium for students to share information, discuss, or share opinions about their university or college.

The @collegemenfess account is one of the auto bases accounts that has the most followers. This account is the first auto base-based account and is currently the only auto base-based account used and specifically for students at the university level. As of April 2020, the @collegemenfess account had around 472,400 followers. Because it is based on an auto base, the @collegemenfess account is a means for students to send tweets about the university, whether discussing, asking questions, or sharing opinions.

Go et al. (2009) argue that with social media, access to opinions of various people and various issues becomes more likely. Opinion has various meanings from various sources. In Webster's New World College Dictionary, opinion is defined as a view, decision, or estimate formed in mind about the issue at hand. Meanwhile, William Albright defines opinion as to any expression on a topic that is controversial or debated.

On the other hand, Wahyudi in Fatima (2016) defines opinion as an individual opinion that is not based on facts and is more based on the individual's own personal thoughts. Furthermore, William and Cleve argue that opinion has three components: beliefs, values, and expectations (Sugianto, 2017). In addition, opinion has three directions: positive, neutral, and negative (Novantirani et al., 2015). Nowadays, opinions appear to be freely expressed on social media. The right to freedom of expression also underlies the freedom of people to have opinions and share opinions using social media. So, social media can be used as a medium to share opinions.

Followers of @collegemenfess also take advantage of this auto base account as a medium for sharing opinions with other users. Based on the phenomenon of the number of auto bases on Twitter and the use of auto bases for Twitter users, the researcher is interested in examining the use of one auto base on Twitter as a medium for sharing opinions. In addition, the lack of research that discusses auto base in social media is also one of the reasons for researchers to conduct research and contribute to communication science. So, this study aims to determine the use of the @collegemenfess auto base account as a medium for sharing opinions.

Social media is internet-based media that can be in the form of applications or websites. Social media allows users to connect and interact with anyone, both those who already know and those who do not (Obar & Wildman, 2015). According to Meike and Young (in Setiadi, 2016), social media can be defined as a form of merging or integrating personal communication that is shared with other individuals personally with public media. Users can communicate with anyone and share without any special individual. Social media is also user-generated content (UGC), meaning that the users themselves produce content from the media. With social media, activities can be carried out in two directions and with various exchanges, such as communication and collaboration of visual, written, and even audio-visual. Meanwhile, according to Susanto (2017), social media has several functions. Social media can serve to make individual social interactions wider by utilising the

internet and technologies. Social media can also change unidirectional communication from one to many media (one institution to many audiences) to dialogical communication (with many fellow audiences). In addition, social media also functions as a driver of the democratisation of information and knowledge needed by the community. With this social media, people can express their ideas, thoughts and opinions democratically.

Many researchers are interested in studying the increasingly widespread use of social media. One of them (Sarlak et al., 2020) investigated the use of social media for organisations. The study revealed that social media is useful for sharing information, communicating, and discussing in organisations. Yi Liu and Tuba Bakici have also carried out other research on the use of social media to find that social media has developed and adapted in an organisation. Social media has become a medium to improve organisational performance and efficiency in sharing information, communicating, and discussing (Liu & Bakici, 2019). The current use of social media has also been studied by (Allington et al., 2020). They found that during the Covid-19 pandemic, social media was used as a source and information centre. From the results of their research, they also found the negative impact of using social media as a source of information, which could lead to misinformation such as hoaxes. However, the positive impact of using social media remains, namely a source of information that is constantly updated.

At this time, social media continues to grow and is used more and more. One of the most widely used social media is Twitter. Based on data from PT Bakrie Telecom quoted by Kominfo, Twitter users in Indonesia in 2019 had reached 19.5 million out of 500 million global users. In addition, Twitter has also become one of the largest social media in the world (*Kementerian Komunikasi Dan Informatika*, n.d.). Twitter is a social media that is categorised as a social media microblog. Twitter was first launched on 13 July 2006 (Mostafa, 2013). The main use of Twitter is to upload short posts through the site or application. Content uploaded to Twitter is called a tweet. On the official Twitter page, developer.twitter.com, it is explained that the maximum length of a tweet when Twitter was first released was 140 characters. However, in November 2017, the official character limit was changed to 280 characters for each tweet. This change makes Twitter a social media writing based on SMS (short message service) (*Counting Characters — Twitter Developers*, n.d.).

Just like other social media, Twitter is also used by its users for various things. Because it can be said as an SMS-based service, Twitter is mainly used to share thoughts, views, and opinions in writing or tweets. One Twitter user can interact or respond to another user's tweet by commenting, liking the tweet, or sharing the tweet. Currently, Twitter is one of the social media that has the most significant number of active users. A large number of Twitter social media users also expands its use.

Many researchers are interested in investigating the use of social media Twitter, one of which is Sidharth Muralidharan (Muralidharan et al., 2011), who found that Twitter provides education and information about the earthquake occurred in Haiti. Research on the use of Twitter was also conducted by (Rufai & Bunce, 2020), who found that accounts on Twitter have a variety of purposes, such as politics, communication, information

sharing, as well as 'moral boosting.' Similar research on the use of Twitter is now also conducted by (Windasari et al., 2017). Windasari analyses and researches Twitter as a medium for expressing and sharing opinions. They analysed opinions on Twitter about Gojek. This study, it was found that there were negative and positive opinions about Gojek expressed through Twitter. From previous studies, it can be seen that Twitter as a social media can actually be used as a means of information, education, politics, or sharing opinions.

Twitter is increasingly popular among people today, especially in Indonesia. One of the things that are often found on Twitter in Indonesia is an auto base account. An auto base account is an account that has an auto direct message service feature that allows Twitter users to send DM (Direct Message) to the auto base account. Then later, the DM sent will be uploaded automatically into a tweet on the auto base account (Syam & Maryani, 2019). Other Twitter users cannot know the identity or username of the sender of the message, except for the owner of the auto base account and the sender of the message itself. Messages sent to the auto base account are called *menfess*. Users who send *menfess* are called senders, while those who have auto base accounts are called admins.

The auto base can be regarded as a unique phenomenon in the world of social media. Several researchers have previously discussed auto base, one of which is a research team from UPVN Jakarta investigating the form of communication that occurred in one of the auto base accounts, namely @NCTCONFESS. The study results indicate that the @NCTCONFESS auto base account is used as a communication medium for NCT boyband fans. From this account, the researcher also found a strong communication relationship among NCT fans in Indonesia (Sari et al., 2020). A research team has also researched auto base accounts from Singaperbangsa University on the @18autobase account. This study found that users used the @18autobase account as a medium for telling stories and pouring their hearts out anonymously (Celvin Moniaga Sipahutar, Ana Fitriana Poerana, 2017). Lisa Mardiana has also studied this auto base account. Mardiana studied self-disclosure through the auto base account @subtanyarl. This study found that the @subtanyarl account became a medium of communication, self-disclosure such as emotions, sadness, anxiety and became a medium for expressing opinions (Mardiana & Zi'ni, 2020).

Each auto base account has its own focus or theme. For example, the @womenfeeds account is devoted to discussing all things related to women, such as make-up and self-care. In addition, the @indomymenfess account is a forum for the fan community for the Korean boyband BTS group. Meanwhile, the @collegemenfess account is dedicated to students. This account is a media for students to share information, discuss, and share opinions about the university.

According to Go et al. (2009), opinion has a variety of meanings from a variety of different sources. In Webster's New World College Dictionary, opinion is defined as a view, decision, or estimate formed in mind about the issue at hand. Meanwhile, William Albigh defines opinion as to any expression on a topic that is controversial or debated. This

opinion is different from Wahyudi (in Fatima, 2016), which defines opinion as an individual opinion that is not based on facts and is more based on the individual's own personal thoughts. In addition, Sunarjo defines opinion as an honest answer (overt) regarding a problem or an answer is given orally or in writing. From the various definitions presented, it can be summarised that opinion can be interpreted as a personal human statement that comes from personal thoughts and is expressed through writing or verbally (Indahsari, 2018). Opinions can be made through informal discussions, mass media, demonstrations, or social media.

This study was conducted to answer the research questions: "How is the use of an auto base account on Twitter as a medium for students to share opinions?"

## **METHOD**

This study used a qualitative method. In the qualitative method, the researcher interprets an event based on the view of the researcher to better understand the object under study (Kasiram, 2010). The researcher also used the content analysis method, namely the content analysis of the Twitter auto base account, @collegemenfess. Content analysis is a method used to study, analyse, and describe the characteristics of the content that is the object of research (Shelley & Krippendorff, 1984). The approach used in this research was qualitative with descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis is carried out to describe an object and the aspects and characteristics that exist in a message (Eriyanto, 2017). The primary data in this study were tweets and comments on the Twitter account @collegemenfess. Meanwhile, secondary data from this research were related literature. The data collection technique was carried out by observing and analysing documents in tweets from the @collegemenfess account and related comments.

## **RESULT**

This study examines an auto base account on Twitter, namely the @collegemenfess account. @collegemenfess was created in September 2018 and started being active as an auto base account on 30 September 2018. @collegemenfess is an auto base account created specifically for students. The latest data in April 2020 showed that this account had 472,400 followers and followed 40,400 Twitter users. Meanwhile, the number of tweets on the @collegemenfess account in April 2020 was 340,000 tweets.



Figure 1. @collegemenfess Profile



Source: [twitter.com/collegemenfess](https://twitter.com/collegemenfess)

Twitter users who can use the auto base service or send messages to the @collegemenfess account are only those who have followed and been followed back by the @collegemenfess account. To be able to be followed by the @collegemenfess account, users must meet several conditions. The conditions may vary for each open follow back session. However, the main requirement for each open follow back session is to show identity as a student by writing the major in the user's profile bio or replying to the tweet of the open follow back session by mentioning the major and university.

Figure 2. Example of Open follow back sessions



Source: [Twitter.com/collegemenfess](https://twitter.com/collegemenfess)



The @collegemenfess account has several rules that followers and account users must adhere to. One of the rules is that users may not send messages or menfess that are not following the concept of the @collegemenfess account. Because the @collegemenfess account is only for students and discusses universities, users who discuss other than that will be blocked and can no longer see tweets from the @collegemenfess account.

Figure 3. Rules of the @collegemenfess account

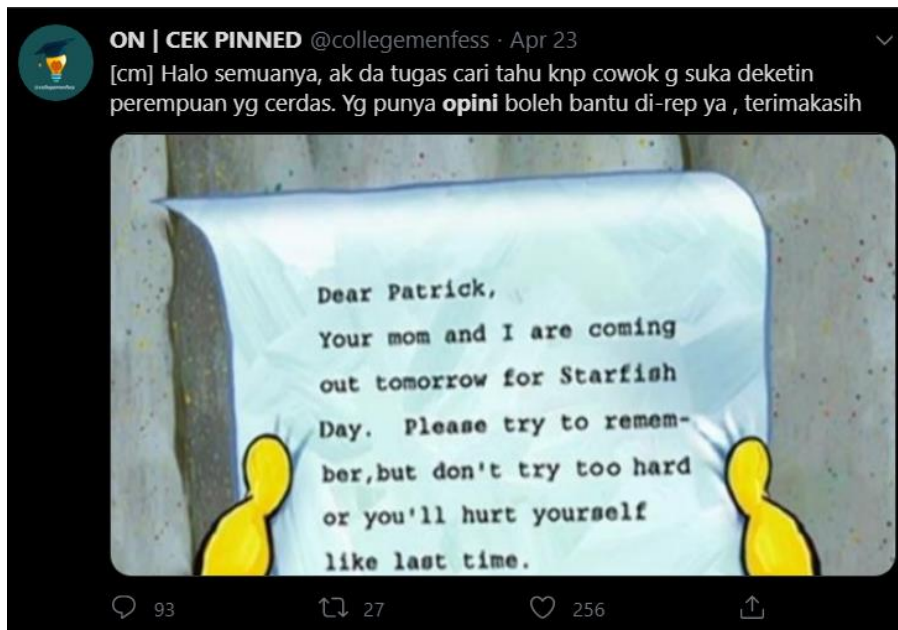


Source: Twitter.com/collegemenfess

The @collegemenfess account does not allow discussion of topics other than the university world. However, the account still allows discussion and opinion on social, economic, political, cultural issues, in addition to issues that lead to knowledge about universities. Based on observations of the use of the @collegemenfess auto base account, the researcher found several menfess sent by users as well as comments on the menfess. Researchers wanted to investigate how the @collegemenfess auto base account is used as a medium to share opinions. menfess, tweets, and comments that are studied were those that ask for opinions on an issue, which contain opinions or have opinions from other users in the comment's column. So, the researcher chose several menfess that contained an opinion element or asked other users' opinions. This selection was narrowed down to tweets containing the words 'opinion' or 'discussion' and had many

responses (reply, like, and retweet). Comments on menfess are selected based on the highest number of responses (can be in the form of retweets, replies, and likes)—some of the menfess and comments that became the research object are presented in the following sections.

**Figure 4. menfess asking users' opinions on "why men do not like smart women."**



Source: Twitter.com/collegemenfess

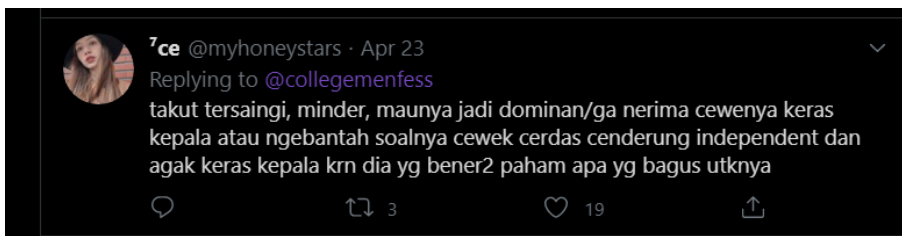
The menfess was sent on 23 April 2020 at 22:57 WIB and was about a sender who asked why men do not like smart women. The menfess received many responses, namely 93 comments, 27 Retweets, and 256 likes. In the comments, other Twitter users also shared their opinions. Some opinions are as follows:

**Figure 5. Comments containing opinions about the menfess**



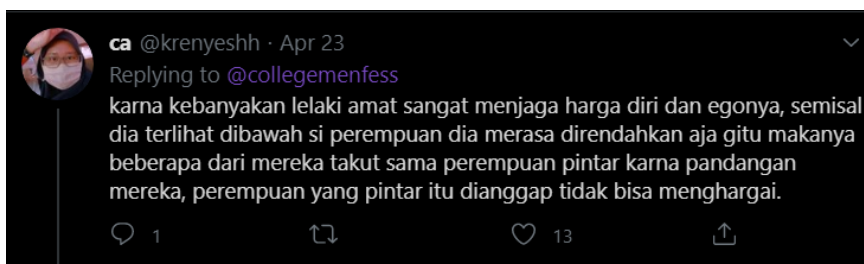
Source: Twitter/lunaelumentum

Figure 6. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



Source: Twitter/myhoneystars

Figure 7. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



Source: Twitter/Krenyeshh

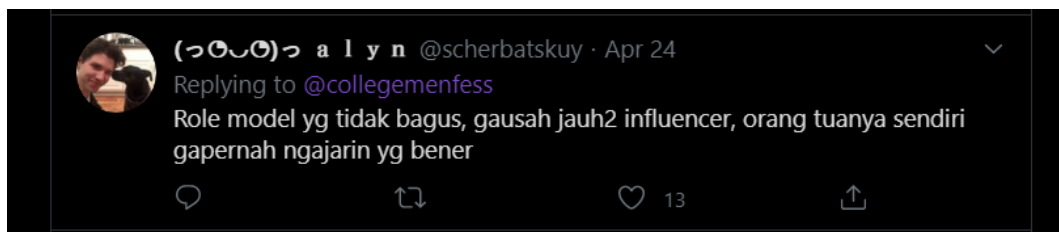
Figure 8. Opinions about the causes of low morals and ethics in today's youth



Source: Twitter/Collegemenfes

Menfess contains a sender who invites discussion and opinions about the causes of low morals and ethics in today's youth to those who read the menfess. The menfess received 39 comments, 5 Retweets and 41 likes. In the comments, other Twitter users share their opinions. Some opinions are:

Figure 9. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



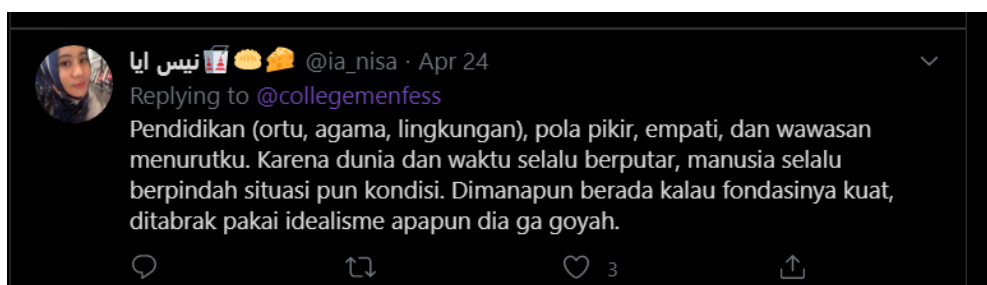
Source: Twitter/scherbatskuy

Figure 10. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



Source: Twitter/IrawatiFebbyP

Figure 11. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



Source: Twitter/ia\_nisa

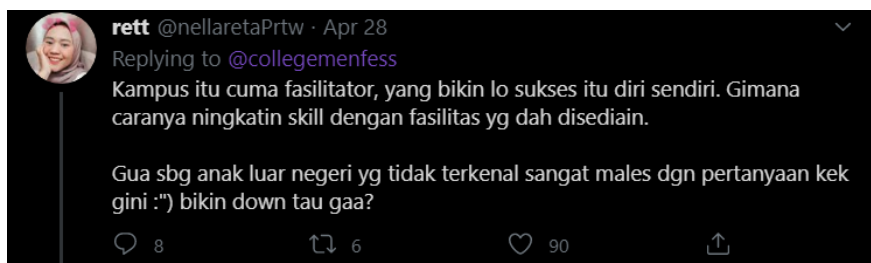
Figure 12. Menfess that invites Twitter users to discuss and give opinions about graduates from universities that are not too well known will have difficulty getting a job



Source: Twitter/collegemenfess

The menfess was sent on 28 April 2020 at 05:42 WIB. menfess contains a sender who invites discussion and asks opinions about "the truth that graduates from not too famous universities will find it difficult to get a job" to people who read the menfess. The menfess received 222 comments, 74 Retweets and 1000 likes. In the comments, other Twitter users share their opinions. Some opinions are as follows:

Figure 13. Comments containing opinions about the menfess



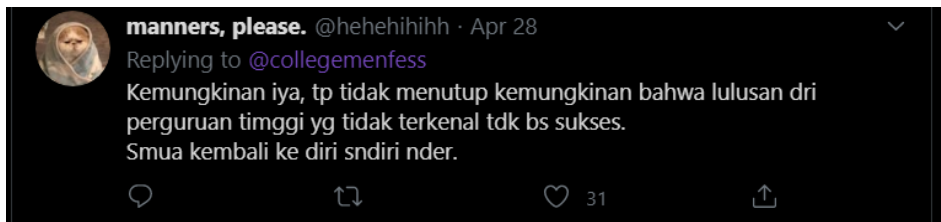
Source: Twitter/nellaretaPrtw

Figure 14. Comments containing opinions about the menfess



Source: Twitter/collegemenfess

Figure 15. Comments containing opinions about the menfess

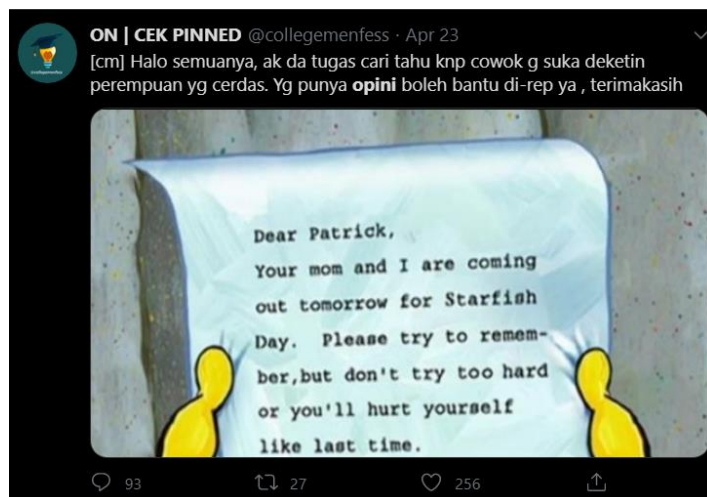


Source: Twitter/hehehihih

## DISCUSSION

From the findings and data observations and associated with the theory used, the researchers analysed the following:

Figure 16. Menfess asking users

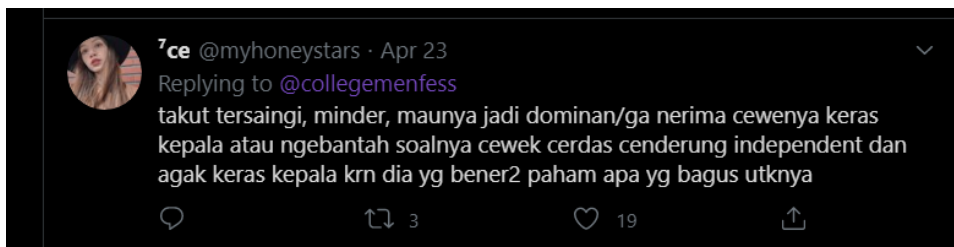


Source: Twitter/collegemenfess

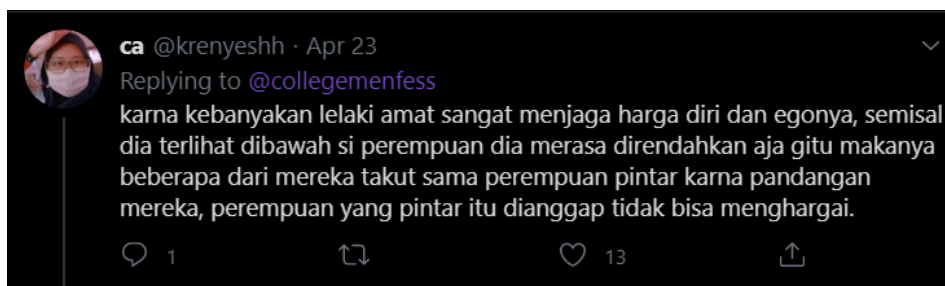
In the menfess, it can be concluded that the sender or the person who sent the menfess wanted to ask other Twitter users' opinions on an issue, namely why men do not like being approached by smarter women. This menfess becomes a medium for other Twitter users to share opinions about the issue through the comment's column on the menfess. Some opinions are as follows:

**Figure 17. Comments containing opinions on the menfess**

Source: Twitter/lunaelumentum

**Figure 18. Comments containing opinions on the menfess**

Source: Twitter/myhoneystars

**Figure 19. Comments containing opinions on the menfess**

Source: Twitter/collegemenfess

The three comments in figures 17-19 are some of the comments on the menfess. The three comments were written by different accounts and contain different opinions as well. The account @lunaelumentum believes that men do not like smart women because men think that they are the highest in the world and invincible. In addition, men are afraid of being silenced by intelligent women. Another account that gave an opinion on the menfess was @myhoneystars, who argued that men will be afraid of competition, feel inferior, want to be dominant, and cannot accept stubborn and independent women. The @krenyeshh account conveyed another opinion that men really care about their self-esteem and do not want to feel humiliated. According to them, men believe that smart women are considered to have no respect for men.



The three accounts shared their opinions on the issues contained in menfess. The three opinions differ. In accordance with the opinion theory stated by Wahyudi in Fatima (2016), opinion is individual and not based on facts. Instead, it is more based on the individual's own personal thoughts. So, the three accounts wrote their opinions based on their thoughts. Then, when viewed from the component theory of opinion formation by William and Cleve, opinions are formed through beliefs, values and expectations. Everyone has different beliefs, values and expectations. These three components affect the three accounts in opinion. Because the three components are different for each person, opinions on an issue are also different, as seen in the comments on the menfess. Senders who send menfess and Twitter users who share their opinions in the comment's column apply the function of social media, namely as a medium for democratising information. In addition, they also show the function of social media as an information and education function by providing new information and new knowledge through the opinions they write about an issue. So, in this case, the auto base @collegemenfess account is used by users as a medium to share opinions by sending menfess and asking for opinions. Other users also share their opinions by commenting and writing their opinions on related issues.

**Figure 20. Opinions about the causes of low morals and ethics in today's youth**

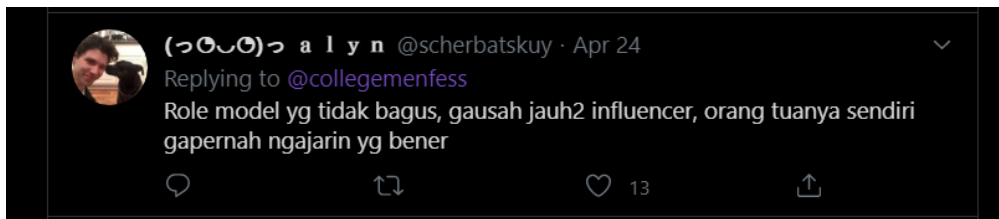


Source:Twitter/collegemenfes

In the menfess, it is known that the sender or the person who sent the menfess wanted to invite other Twitter users to discuss by asking their opinions on an issue, namely the causes of low morals and ethics in today's youth. menfess is a medium for other Twitter users to share opinions on the issue through the comment's column. Some opinions are as follows:



Figure 21. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



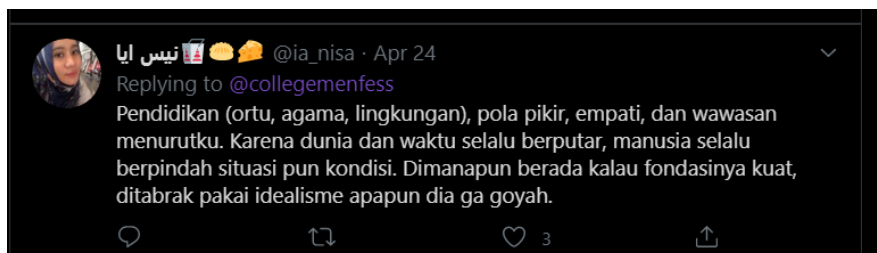
Source: Twitter/scherbatskuy

Figure 22. Comments containing opinions on the menfess



Source: Twitter/IrawatiFebbyP

Figure 23 Comments containing opinions on the menfess



Source: Twitter/ia\_nisa

The three comments above are some of the comments on the menfess. Different accounts with different opinions wrote the three comments. The @scherbatskuy account thinks that the cause of low morals and ethics in adolescents is due to bad role models. According to them, parents never taught the right thing. The @irawatifebbyp account conveyed another opinion that this can be caused by many factors, such as environmental factors, friendships, family, social, education, romance, unhealthy relationships, social media, underage age, religion, mental guidance, and parental supervision. Meanwhile, the @ia\_nisa account believes that the cause of the issue is education, parents, religion, environment, mindset, insight, and a strong self-foundation.

In accordance with the opinion theory stated by Wahyudi, opinion is an individual opinion that is not based on facts and is based on the individual's own personal thoughts. The

three accounts wrote their opinions based on their thoughts. Different thoughts and components of opinion formation, such as different beliefs, values and expectations, also give different opinions. In the object of this research, it can also be seen that the sender who sent the menfess and Twitter users who share their opinions in the comment's column apply social media as a medium for democratising information by providing opinions. In addition, social media functions as information and education by providing new information and new knowledge through the opinions they write about an issue. In addition, the @collegemenfess account is used as a medium to share opinions by sending menfess, asking opinions, and sharing opinions with other users by commenting on related issues.

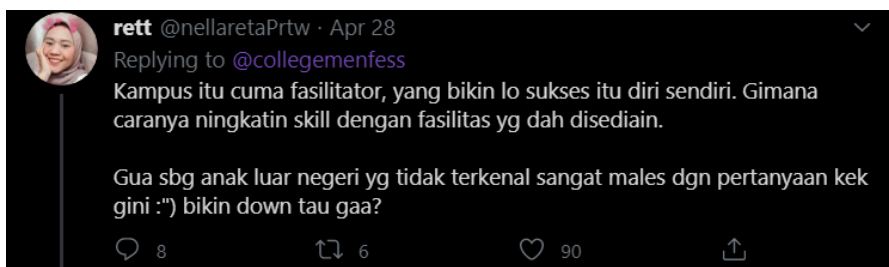
**Figure 24. Inviting users to comment about job availability for university graduates**



Source: Twitter/collegemenfes

In the menfess, it was discovered that the sender or the person who sent the menfess wanted to invite other Twitter users to discuss by asking their opinion on an issue. The issue discussed is that graduates from lesser-known universities will find it difficult to find work. Menfess is a medium for other Twitter users to share their opinions on the issue through the comment's column. Some opinions are as follows:

**Figure 25. Comments containing opinions about the menfess**



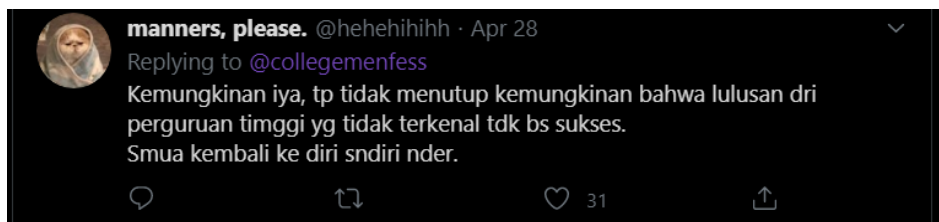
Source: Twitter/nellaretaPrtw

Figure 26. Comments containing opinions about the menfess



Source: Twitter/01KadekPanca

Figure 27. Comments containing opinions about the menfess



Source: Twitter/hehehihihh

The three comments above are part of the comments on the menfess. The three comments were written by different accounts and had different opinions as well. The account @nellarettaprtw thinks that the campus is only a facilitator and what determines a person's success is their respective abilities and skills. The @01kadekpanca account conveyed another opinion that some companies did see the origin of the campus for specific majors. However, to register as a civil servant, only the accreditation of the campus and the study program is checked. Furthermore, the account @hehehihihh also has the opinion that there is a possibility that universities are not famous for being difficult to get a job. However, according to them, it is possible that people who are graduates from not well-known universities can also be successful. According to them, it all depends on each individual.

Based on the analysis of the object, it was found that according to the opinion theory stated by Wahyudi, opinion is an individual opinion that is not based on facts and is based on individual personal thoughts. In this case, the three accounts wrote their opinions based on their own thoughts. Different thoughts and opinion-forming components such as beliefs, values, and different expectations make the opinions given different. In the object of this research, it was also found that senders who sent the menfess and Twitter users who shared their opinions in the comment's column implemented the function of social media as a medium for democratising information by providing opinions. In addition, the function of social media as a function of information and education is also seen from the existence of new information and new knowledge through written opinions on an issue. It can also be seen that the @collegemenfess auto base account is used by its users as a medium to share opinions by sending menfess, asking opinions, and also sharing opinions by commenting and writing their opinions on related issues.

This finding shows that the auto base account on Twitter can be used as a medium to share opinions by sending menfess to ask opinions about something, invite discussions, and provide opinions through the comment's column. It was found that the @collegemenfess auto base account can also be used as a medium of discussion for its users.

## **CONCLUSION**

From this research, it can be concluded that its users can use social media for various things. In this case, the auto base account is used as a medium to share opinions. In addition, the results of the study also show that the @collegemenfess auto base account is used as a medium for sharing opinions through menfess that ask opinions, invite discussions, or provide opinions on related issues through the comments column.

However, this study has limitations; namely, the researcher could not interview the person who sent the menfess due to the sender's anonymity. Another limitation is the large number of tweets from the @collegemenfess account, so that researchers cannot observe all tweets that might be used as a medium to share opinions.

## REFERENCES

- Agustina, L. (2018). Pemanfaatan Media Sosial untuk Implementasi E-Government, *Mediakom*, 13, 1–6.
- Allington, D., Duffy, B., Wessely, S., Dhavan, N., & Rubin, J. (2020). Health-protective behaviour, social media usage and conspiracy belief during the COVID-19 public health emergency, *Psychological Medicine*, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S003329172000224X>
- Sipahutar, C.M., Poerana, A.F., & Nurkinan (2017). Pengalaman Komunikasi Curhat Anonim Bagi Followers @18AUTOBASE Di Twitter, *Jurnal Lensa Mutiara Komunikasi*, 4(2), 56–74.
- Eriyanto. (2017). Analisis Naratif : *Dasar-dasar dan Penerapannya dalam Analisis Teks Berita Media*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group
- Fatima, W. (2016). Kemampuan Menentukan Fakta dan Opini dalam Teks Tajuk Rencana Koran Kompas Siswa Kelas XI IPA SMA Negeri 7 Kendari, *Jurnal Bastra (Bahasa Dan Sastra)*, 1(2), 1–16. <http://ojs.uho.ac.id/index.php/BASTRA/Article/download/1509/1064>
- Sukmaningtyas, W.F.(2017). Penggunaan Jejaring Sosial Pada Perilaku Perundungan Siber Remaja Di SMK Negeri 1 Samarinda, *eJournal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 5(1), 170-180.
- Le B., Nguyen H. (2015) Twitter Sentiment Analysis Using Machine Learning Techniques. In: Le Thi H., Nguyen N., Do T. (eds) *Advanced Computational Methods for Knowledge Engineering. Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing*, vol 358. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17996-4\\_25](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17996-4_25)
- Indahsari, R. Y. (2018). *Opini Masyarakat Tuban tentang Citra KPU Kabupaten Tuban Jelang Pemilihan Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Jawa Timur 2018*. [Thesis, Universitas Airlangga]. Retrieved from <http://repository.unair.ac.id/80091/>
- Kasiram, M. (2010). *Metodologi penelitian: Kualitatif–kuantitatif*. Malang: UIN-Maliki Press.
- Kemp, S. (2020). Digital 2020: Indonesia. Accessed from <https://datareportal.com/about>
- Liu, Y., & Bakici, T. (2019). Enterprise social media usage: The motives and the moderating role of public social media experience. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 101, 163–172. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.07.029>
- Mardiana, L., & Zi'ni, A. F. (2020). Pengungkapan Diri Pengguna Akun Autobase Twitter @Ssubtanyarl. *Jurnal Audience*, 3(1), 34–54. <https://doi.org/10.33633/ja.v3i1.4134>
- Mostafa, M. M. (2013). More than words: Social networks' text mining for consumer brand sentiments, *Expert Systems with Applications*, 40(10), 4241–4251. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2013.01.019>

- Muralidharan, S., Rasmussen, L., Patterson, D., & Shin, J. H. (2011). Hope for Haiti: An analysis of Facebook and Twitter usage during the earthquake relief efforts, *Public Relations Review*, 37(2), 175–177. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.01.010>
- Novantirani, A., Sabariah, M. K., & Effendy, V. (2015). Analisis Sentimen pada Twitter untuk Mengenai Penggunaan Transportasi Umum Darat Dalam Kota dengan Metode Support Vector Machine, *E-Proceeding of Engineering*, 2(1), 1–7.
- Nurdin, N., Stockdale, R., & Scheepers, H. (2013). The use of social media to gather qualitative data: A case of government E-procurement implementation and use. *Proceedings of the 24th Australasian Conference on Information Systems*, 1–13.
- Obar, J. A., & Wildman, S. (2015). Social media definition and the governance challenge: An introduction to the special issue. *Telecommunications Policy*, 39(9), 745–750. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2015.07.014>
- Rogers, L. E., & Cummings, J. A. (2017). Relational Communication Control. In *Researching Interactive Communication Behavior: A Sourcebook of Methods and Measures* (pp. 93–106). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506349169.n7>
- Rufai, S. R., & Bunce, C. (2020). World leaders' usage of Twitter in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: a content analysis. *Journal of Public Health*, 42(3), 510–516. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdaa049>
- Sari, I. P., Irawatie, A., & Kusumastuti, R. D. (2020). Pengaruh Komunikasi Nctzen Indonesia terhadap perilaku Memilih NCT Dream, *Journal of Digital Education, Communication, and Arts (DECA)*, 3(1), 40–50. <https://doi.org/10.30871/deca.v3i01.1932>
- Sarlak, M. A., Salamzadeh, Y., & Farzad, F. S. (2020). Actor-Network Theory and Networked Organizations, Proposing a Conceptual Framework. In *Contemporary Applications of Actor Network Theory* (pp. 197–210). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-7066-7\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-7066-7_11)
- Shelley, M., & Krippendorff, K. (1984). Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology, *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 79(385), 240. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2288384>
- Sugianto, K. (2017). Opini Pemirsa Surabaya Terhadap Blur dalam Program Acara di Televisi Pendahuluan, *Journal E-Komunikasi*, 5(1), 1-10.
- Susanto, E. H. (2017). Media Sosial sebagai Pendukung Jaringan komunikasi Politik, *Jurnal ASPIKOM*, 3(3), 379. <https://doi.org/10.24329/aspikom.v3i3.123>
- Syam, R. I., & Maryani, A. (2019). Fenomena Pseudonim di Twitter: Studi Fenomenologi Konstruksi Identitas Cyber Account di Twitter, *Prosiding Manajemen Komunikasi*, 5(2), 358– 367. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29313/v0i0.16755>

- Windasari, I. P., Uzzi, F. N., & Satoto, K. I. (2017). Sentiment analysis on Twitter posts: An analysis of positive or negative opinion on GoJek. *2017 4th International Conference on Information Technology, Computer, and Electrical Engineering (ICITACEE)*, 266–269. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICITACEE.2017.8257715>

## The Use of Viral Marketing Through Instagram to Increase Brand Awareness

**Deni Yanuar, Zakirah Azman, Febri Nurrahmi, Fithria Qamara**

Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi, FISIP, Universitas Syiah Kuala

Email: deniyanuar@unsyiah.ac.id, kirah.azman@unsyiah.ac.id,

febri.nurrahmi@unsyiah.ac.id; fithriaq@gmail.com

*Received April 5, 2021; Revised Jun. 28, 2021; Accepted Jun. 29, 2021*

### Abstract

The advancement of digital communication has increased the competition, forcing companies to be even more strategic in devising their marketing plans. The planning includes a strategy that can increase brand awareness, such as viral marketing. Viral marketing has been implemented by a local coffee shop in Banda Aceh. This research sets out to describe the use of viral marketing through Instagram to increase brand awareness by Harvies Coffee. The researcher aims to analyze the process through their Instagram messages. This research refers to the Elaboration Likelihood theory to identify the characteristics of Harvies Coffee consumers. Harvies adopts a high integration strategy in its viral marketing. This research employs a qualitative method by using a descriptive approach. The researcher interviews five informants consisting of one key informant and four supporting informants. Informants are selected based on certain criteria in purposive sampling technique. They include the owner of Harvies Coffee, Harvies Coffee creative team members, and their customers. The research finds that Harvies' brand awareness among consumers has increased to brand recall after implementing viral marketing by using Korean drama Start Up on Instagram.

**Keywords:** Brand, Awareness, Word of Mouth, Viral Marketing, Marketing Communication, Instagram.

### INTRODUCTION

The development of technology produces innovative ideas in almost every area of our lives. Technological developments also encourage developments in the business world, one of which is marketing activities (Nurlaela, Tresna, 2013). Changes in the disruptive digital era in Indonesia are beginning to be evident in business life, forcing people to adopt a new lifestyle (Kasali, 2017). Disruption can be seen as a positive thing because it has encouraged dynamic innovation that is more efficient, effective and sophisticated (Kasali, 2017). Digital disruption can be defined as a transformation caused by the development of digital technology and digital business model which results in the ups and downs of business assessment over existing products (Yasa, Nyoman, 2018).



The economy has grown rapidly thanks to the growth of grow-up businesses in various business sectors. One approach is through viral marketing by utilizing social networks, both online and offline to convey advertising and promotional content to the consumers. The implementation of the said approach sometimes surprises consumers and it needs creativity to use viral marketing. Unexpected things will become acceptable to consumers so they are exposed to the strategic messages. This is due to the role of technology in Indonesia, such as the internet. The internet has become a basic need in daily life. A survey conducted by the Indonesia Internet Services Providers Association (APJII) in 2018 revealed that the number of internet users in Indonesia had reached 171.17 billion people or 64.8% of the total population of about 264.16 million people (APJII, 2019).

Belch (2009 in Budiman, (2017) said that the internet has offered an opportunity to market to customers, including loyal customers or business-to-business. E-commerce is included in product sales. The internet is moving forward and the advancement of the digitalized world marks a new era called new media. New media knows no limit in accepting messages.

Due to digital disruption, business owners need to be more creative in creating and marketing their products, and in using technology to promote their products. Business owners also need to think carefully about the characteristics of their target market, their habits and lifestyle (Adriyan, 2018). Consumers don't only buy products based on their needs, but they also buy based on interests and ideas on what they might need to buy (Ritzer, 2008).

The distribution of messages is made easier thanks to social media. Scott mentions relevance (2011 in Budiman, 2017) , in which a number of people study a product and connect it to relevant issues, which can be fetched from the internet. As more and more people go online, more activities are also conducted online. It is also the case with marketing communication. The advancement of communication technology has encouraged marketers to keep up with the latest trends in ICT (Situmorang, 2010).

Viral marketing is a method that can be used to promote products in a marketing communication activity. This approach can make people happily recommend the products to other people (Hamdani & Mawardi, 2018). By adopting viral marketing, a business can allocate low budget to promote products because they can rely on customers' word-of-mouth (Rayport, 1996). The promotional activity is conducted to raise brand awareness.

Brand awareness is a tool to influence customers in making decisions at the stage of alternative evaluation. Customers typically want quality products with a competitive price (Adriyan, 2018). Customers will prefer a product that is stuck on their mind rather than unfamiliar products. Social media can be an opportunity for marketers to boost public trust and establish customer relationships, so that they can easily boost their brand awareness (Hariyanti & Wirapraja, 2018).

Brand awareness plays a role in shaping the strength of a brand (brand equity) as long as how much consumers are aware of the brand. How the brand can be in the consumer's memory, so when asked about a brand a customer can immediately say the brand he remembers (Atmaja, Lukas, 2008). Brand awareness becomes important when the product category that we have or production is a product category produced by many companies such as beverage or food categories, so how we use the application so that our products are always an option is an important step (Fajariah, 2016).

A coffee shop in Aceh has used the theme Third Space as their opportunity to seize market share in Aceh, businesses make coffee shops as an alternative space, in addition to homes and offices. The third space could have been the first space for some Acehnese. Some Acehnese people choose to drink coffee at coffee shops instead of at home. Aceh itself has become a city of a thousand coffee shops. It is hard to find a spot where there's no coffee shop (Zulfikar, Putra, Syah, Ismar, Sadiqin, ihsan, & Pohan, 2018).

One of the coffee shop owners who have used the internet is Tomy Harvie, the owner of this Harvies Coffee, a shop often markets its products through instagram social media accounts. Then Harvies Coffee reopened with a new concept and branding in 2019 until now Harvies Coffee already has three outlets in Banda Aceh, a subsidiary in food (Dapur Liar) and 10.000 followers on Instagram. This figure becomes the highest when compared to other similar businesses in Banda Aceh which has only 500-2000 followers. Harvies Coffee has also been covered by the national television, NET TV's Net Lifestyle program, Weekend List episode on December 13, 2014. Net TV discussed Aceh coffee and Harvies became one of the coffee shops that became a popular and highly recommended spot to visit because it has a unique concept of place and brewing techniques (Weekend List Net, 2014).

Here's a comparison table of the number of followers on the three instagram accounts of the most frequently appeared coffee brands when researchers conducted initial interviews with several students in Banda Aceh in October, 2020.

**Tabel 1 Comparison of The Number of Followers on Instagram Account**

No .	Users	Number of followers
1.	@harviescoffee	10.1 K
2.	@kalaberdua	2.748
3.	@tokokopikiri	2.703

**Source: Research on Instagram**

The initial interview conducted on September 15, 2020 to Harvies Coffee owners and some instagram users who often post Harvies products in their insta story features said

that Harvies products have a consistent taste and unique logo design to be published on social media, in addition to the homy concept adds its own comfortable impression on its customers, some others mention that Harvies products often appear on their instagram account timeline so it encourages them to visit.

Based on the background above, I aim to identify and describe how the viral marketing process is run by Harvies Coffee. This research aims to find out the process of implementing viral marketing conducted by Harvies Coffee Banda Aceh through Instagram media. This research is important to contribute in providing science in the field of communication science from theory and concept. This research is expected to be a literature student majoring in Communication Science, especially in the field of marketing communication. This research is also important because through this research it is expected that entrepreneurs or similar business owners can refer to the practices in marketing and can increase creativity in marketing techniques.

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is a theory used in this study, a theory of persuasion that tries to identify when a person will be affected and is reluctant to be influenced by information obtained (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). This theory mentions that there are two routes to change attitude, namely central routes and peripheral routes. This theory is reinforced by two psychologists Richard Petty and Jhon Cacioppo. This theory explains persuasion can appear at high or shallow use and can occur in both. When a customer buys a product the customer will face a central route or peripheral route (Norhabiba, 2019).

Criticism of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) seems to assume a high argument for a success, in which the central route is dealing with a change in habits, while the peripheral route is more to do with a temporary change in attitude. The question that represents this action is how people's attitudes can be changed easily, and how to change the attitudes of people who have a dogmatic type (Paramamita, Diah, Wigati, Hestining, Oktavianingsih, & Sanjaya, 2015). Although there are weaknesses this model is able to answer the change in attitude that can result from the spread of stimulus that is temporary but can affect the attitude to remain confident in the application of viral marketing used by Harvies Coffee.

The concept of this theory becomes the first basis in identifying what the thought process adopted by customers when determining products they want to buy so that companies can more easily establish what kind of actions are appropriate in achieving the target (Irwandy & Rachmawati, 2018). In this study, researchers used this theory in hopes of identifying how the character of Harvies Coffee consumers so Harvies Coffee chooses to use the application of viral marketing in promoting its products.

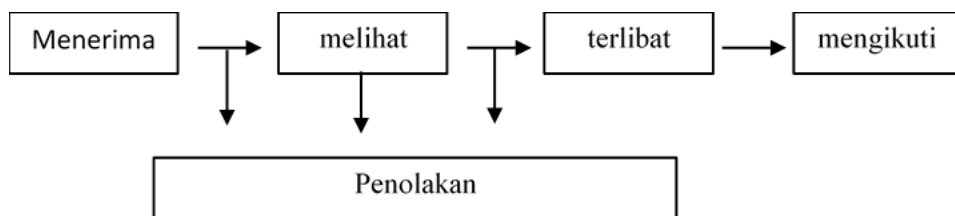
Viral marketing is one of the efforts implemented using the network impact of communication technology used well for a wide number of consumers and lightning similar to computer viruses that can hack network systems around the world (Velina, 2010 dalam Budiman, 2017). According to Strauss (2014), viral marketing is the power of word of mouth that occurs when consumers inform a message to others through posts on social media. Viral marketing was developed by Jeffrey F. Rayport. The article titled The Virus of Marketing explains that viruses are like diseases that will spread and impact many objects. This object can be utilized into a marketing program, in the hope that messages can be spread quickly and at a low cost but can have a big effect for marketers (Situmorang, 2010). Viral marketing is a concept that many marketers use by relying on loyalty customers to convey the satisfaction they get through social media that they have to other users in order to give confidence to choose and use the product. (Helm, 2000).

The desired hope of the success of viral marketing is WOM, which is a situation where customers want to say and tell about their satisfaction with the product to others (Situmorang, 2010).

In addition, there are two psychological factors that encourage people to share their satisfaction with others positively (Situmorang, 2010):

1. **Peer Pressure** is the effect that arises against the group for a lifetime, having the same type (peer group) as expected individuals are able to change behavior, habits in order to join the group.
2. **Prestise** or pride is a necessity that everyone has. Everyone wants recognition and is seen as well and appreciated by the people around him. Society tries to make itself seen by others, by obtaining luxury products, exist in public and trying to make themselves competent so that others have a good view.

The chart below describes four viral processes that close with rejection. This shows that whether the message disseminated will make consumers feel important and interesting to inform it. This can be seen by what the message will be delivered and what it will look like to affect the actions of consumers, at the time of a rejection then the message will not be effectively even lost before it reaches the target.

**Table 1 Viral process****Source: Richardson (2004)**

Brand Awareness is closely related to the strength of the brand in spreading certain signals, memories, with the ability of customers to know the uniqueness of the product with other products (Keller, 2013). Brand Awareness is the power of potential customers in knowing, having a memory about a brand so that it is included in a category of choice in their memory. It shows that there is a strong involvement by consumers about the selected product category. That way, brand awareness can create a broad market and change market behavior. If awareness of the brand is lacking, it is believed that the strength of the brand must be low then brand awareness must be strong from every application made (Durianto, Darmadi, Sugiharto, & Toni, 2001).

There are four stages of brand awareness according to Hermawan (2010) :

1. Unaware of Brand, consumers are not aware of the existence of a brand so it is necessary to make efforts to remind the brand to customers.
2. Brand Recognition, brands began to be introduced so that consumers remember the brand again.
3. Brand Recall, the stage of determining the main choice of a brand without the need for help, is the opposite of Brand Recognition.
4. Top of Mind, is a brand already attached to the consumer's mind. Defined a definite choice that is on the minds of consumers.

Instagram is an application from one of the developments of the tech world which works almost similarly to Twitter, but has a difference that lies in its users (Atmoko, Bambang, 2012). Instagram can add insight to society and be a reference in developing creativity, because Instagram has tools that can edit images to be beautiful, more art and better. Instagram is often utilized by marketers as a very precise and relevant promotional media in this era, Instagram is expected to be a proper promotional tool and in accordance with segmentation and target markets.

Harvies Coffee is the first arabica coffee shop in Banda Aceh that carries the concept of homey place or located in a house. Different from the coffee shop in general located in the shop or shop, Harvies Coffee managed to attract the interest of the public, especially

teenagers in Banda Aceh, in addition to the concept of the place, Harvies Coffee also stands out with the technique of making arabica coffee using traditional tools. Harvies Coffee has also been covered by the national television media, NET TV in its program Net Lifestyle Weekend List. On December 13, 2014 Net TV discussed Aceh coffee and Harvies became one of the coffee shops that became popular because it has a unique concept (Weekend List Net, 2014). The most significant difference between Harvies Coffee and other coffee shops is in the technique of brewing coffee using manual brewing tools such as vietnamese drip coffee maker, syphon coffee maker and pour over. This is different because in general arabica coffee is brewed using an espresso electric machine. In addition, customers can also directly see the process of making coffee because Harvies carries the theme of open bar.

Harvies Coffee also actively interacts with its customers through social media, namely Instagram, until now the number of followers of @harviescoffee accounts has reached 10.000 followers, when compared to the number of followers of other coffee shop instagram accounts in Banda Aceh, Harvies Coffee became the coffee shop account with the highest number of followers on instagram social accounts. Nowadays similar coffee shops are mushrooming, even big brands from the capital have also started to enter Banda Aceh, as a businessman Tomy has been aware of this since the beginning so that he and the team are prepared with all the application and his own way to remain the best local brand. In this study, I will review the application of marketing used by Harvies Coffee during its operation.

The research sets out to answer the question: how did Harvies Coffee in Banda Aceh use viral marketing on Instagram to boost its brand awareness?

## METHODS

Descriptive qualitative is a method used in this study because researchers want to describe how Viral Marketing is used on Instagram to increase brand awareness of a product. The method used uses phenomenology. This research interviewed five sources, namely one key informant and four supporting informants. The selection of informants is done using purposive sampling techniques chosen based on certain criteria, namely Harvies coffee owner, Harvies Coffee creative team and Harvies Coffee consumers. To collect data, I interviewed selected informants according to criteria, observed Harvies Coffee consumers and conducted documentation searches related to research. The authors used qualitative data analysis techniques for Miles and Huberman models (Emzir, 2012).

**Table 2** List of research informants

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Job title</b>
1.	Tomy Harvie	31 years old	Harvies Coffee owner
2..	Teuku Fadhil	22 years old	Head Barista of Harvies Coffee 1
3.	Fani Atiqah	22 years old	Influencer
4.	Dian Islami	23 years old	Unsyiah student
5.	Humaira	24 years old	Local civil servant

Source: Research Data

## RESULT

### The Implementation of Viral Marketing on Harvies Coffee's Instagram

The results were obtained by interviewing five informants, including a key informant who is the owner of Harvies Coffee and four supporting informants consisting of one person from Harvies coffee internal team, one influencer in Banda Aceh and three Harvies coffee customers with established criteria.

For a key informant, Tomy Harvie, I asked the objectives of the application of viral marketing. I interviewed Harvies Coffee owner about how the application of viral marketing can be utilized by Harvies Coffee so that products go viral and can increase brand awareness. I asked the second informant, Mutia Rahayu, who works as content creator and copywriter of Harvies Coffee instagram account, questions about whether the application applied can affect publicity. I also interviewed Fani Atiqah, an influencer who often promotes Harvies Coffee products on his instagram account. From this informant, I want to know the reasons why consumers were willing to promote Harvies Coffee products. Other informants are harvies coffee consumers who have met the criteria of informants that have been determined by researchers, including Humaira, Dian and Khansa. From this supporting informant, I want to know the consumers' response about Harvies Coffee products to the application of viral marketing.

### Using Instastory

In the study of documentation, researchers monitor instagram that has been utilized by Harvies Coffee in conducting viral marketing of marketed products, the focus of this study is the form of content and messages that want to be conveyed both on Instagram feeds and on insta story features. I also found that the virality of Harvies Coffee brand initially occurred unplanned or incidentally.

*“Ah yes, it’s unexpected.. I’m not at all updated on things like that” (interview with Tomy Harvie, September 15, 2020).*

Therefore in the stages and process of viral marketing at Harvies Coffee itself has not been organized and structured.

### **Collaborating with Net TV on Weekend List**

Harvies Coffee in its first year can be known by the public because of its uniqueness in the presentation of Arabica coffee as well as the unusual concept of the place, this then attracted the attention of an informant account about @IloveAceh on the social networking site Twitter, to make a review about Harvies Coffee. The account's review then attracted the attention of national TV station Net TV in its show Weekend List to cover directly Harvies Coffee coffee shop in Banda Aceh, from the coverage, Harvies coffee name began to be discussed and went viral among teenagers.

**Picture 2. Screenshot of Weekend List’s Harvies Coffee edition**



**Source** [www.youtube.com/channel](http://www.youtube.com/channel)

The first application of viral marketing conducted by Harvies Coffee was in 2014 by utilizing its uniqueness and difference from other coffee shops so as to attract the attention of the public.

*“NET TV came to cover us because at the time, first, our location which is not Penerapans, and then we have unique coffee presentation.” (interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11, 2021).*

According to Tomy, the coverage by Net TV boosted the popularity of Harvies Coffee, especially among Banda Aceh millennials.



### Picture 3. Unique way to share information on job vacancy

#### **NYARI ORANG HILANG !!**

**BARISTA - WAITERS**

Mengerjakan Sholat 5 waktu  
Jujur dan Mau Belajar  
Gak Banyak Drama apalagi Baperan  
Berpenampilan Bersih/Rapi dan Ramah

**APA KAMU MERASA SESUAI DGN SYARAT KAMI ??**

KIRIM LAMARAN ANDA (cv, fotocopy  
KTP, dan Pasphoto Warna)

ke E-mail : harvies89@gmail.com

note : tidak melayani sms, WA, Telp dan DM

*Harvies*

Source [www.instagram.com/harviescoffee](https://www.instagram.com/harviescoffee)

### Collaborating with an influencer

In 2019 Harvies Coffee worked together with a social media influencer, also known as buzzer, Khalil (@khaliltoktok) to create content to promote Harvies Coffee, including videos with promotional messages.

*"I gave him a script and then Khalil made a video content which consisted of messages that I want to convey. There were four points that I highlighted and he developed the ideas and concept. He had the idea to create a song, and so on," (interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11, 2021).*

In this case, Tomy initially only intended to create a portfolio of advertising videos to be posted on his instagram account. However, unexpectedly the video received a positive response and went viral among millennials.

*"Khalil's influence.. yes quite [influential. At that time even some stores also made the same concept, for example making the same content, like we make songs.. and use Khalil too". (interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11, 2021).*

Khalil and Harvies' collaborative video at the time was in the form of a song with its core messages delivered through lyrics using the melody of the song Dance Monkey. The virality of the dance monkey song itself, became one of the factors that drove the post's virality with Khalil using song as the background music of the video.

Picture 4. Screenshot of Video Dance Monkey



Source [www.instagram.com/tommyharvie](https://www.instagram.com/tommyharvie)

### Using a Booming Korean Drama

Then, in 2020, precisely last December, Harvies went viral again by discussing a popular Korean drama *Start Up*.

*“Actually we also benefited from those moments, last month yes, remember not fitting Korean drama Start-Up drama? Actually I am not a fan of the drama hehehehe, just because.. because the drama was much talked about.. finally I try to watch it, and okay.. it turns out like this so, hehe now I know, so finally I try to discuss with Mutia, and Mutia seems very enthusiastic so because that’s her interests so .. he brought the topic.” (interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11, 2021).*

The viral momentum of Korean drama *Start Up* is utilized by Harvies Coffee, through its instagram account, starting from December 4, 2020, Harvies held a campaign related to the drama *Start Up*. In its implementation, Harvies utilizes the insta story on @harviescoffee instagram account as a medium of delivering his message. I interviewed Mutia Rahayu as an admin and creative team at Harvies Coffee who are tasked in maximizing the insta story feature on Harvies Instagram.

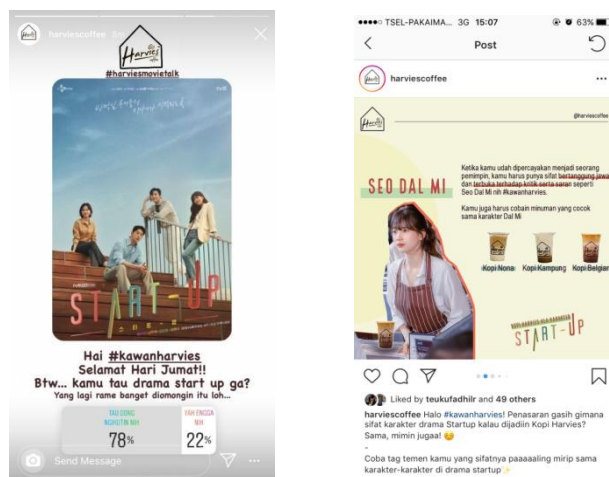
*“So actually because the Start Up is viral, we take that momentum, so that we get high engagement, and people will find and talk about it.. talk about Start Up. They discuss the Korean drama because a lot of people love Korean dramas.” (interview with Mutia Rahayu, January 16, 2021).*

In the implementation stage, Harvies Coffee's creative team first conducted a simple research on the knowledge of Harvies followers about korean drama Start Up by using the "poll" feature in its insta story with questions related to the drama.

*"Before we get into the core of the content, there were steps. First, we touched on the topic and asked for their opinions. We wanted to know what they thought about [the drama] Start Up to get the followers' attention. The responses were amazing. Then we discussed the topic and we blended with some of our products. For example, which character in the drama that they like, and so on, and then we talked about Harvies." (interview with Mutia Rahayu, January 16, 2021).*

Seeing the enthusiasm and response from his followers, Harvies then proceeded to the next stage of inserting the drama materials and hooking them with Harvies products, to enter the core of the campaign that provides special packaging with additional stickers of start up drama characters every purchase of all Harvies products while sticker supplies are still there.

**Picture 5. A Harvies polling featuring Korean drama Start Up characters on @harviescoffee's instastory**



Source [www.instagram.com/harviescoffee](https://www.instagram.com/harviescoffee)

Picture 6. Campaign sticker featuring Korean drama Start Up on Harvies product



Source: [www.instagram.com/harviescoffee](https://www.instagram.com/harviescoffee)

According to Tomy, during the Start Up campaign, sales of Harvies products for two weeks increased significantly, in addition to insights or engagement on Harvies instagram account also increased drastically. For example, for normal content such as photos of Harvies Coffee atmosphere could gain 300-400 views. But when Harvies displayed contents related to the drama Start Up, viewers of the insta story reached 1.800.

*“And it was amazing that time yes, just the day we brought the topic, em.. the number of views jumped, which usually range 300-400 viewers for regular stories, and at that night we gained 1800 views” (interview with Tomy Harvies, January 11, 2021).*

From the campaign, Harvies also got new customers who are K-Pop lovers,

*“Especially consumers who are KPop lovers, there are new customers,” (interview with Tomy Harvies, January 11, 2021).*

The number of instagram followers also increased from 10.1 K to 10.4 K. This shows that the application of viral marketing used by Harvies Coffee by utilizing the viral drama Korea Start Up managed to increase publicity or brand awareness of Harvies Coffee products.

In general, consumer involvement in the application of viral marketing run by Harvies Coffee is quite high, characterized by the postings of Harvies content on their respective social media, according to an interview with one of Harvies Coffee's consumers,

consumers know about Harvies Coffee because they often sees posts about Harvies Coffee through its friends' Instagrams.

*"I found out about Harvies from my friends' social media posts. And then a friend of mine asked me to visit the coffee shop.. so I'm curious too after I saw my friend's snapgram [about Harvies]." (interview with Humaira, January 18, 2021).*

In addition, the reason they want to post Harvies products on social media is because Harvies products are considered a content that can increase self-existence, in addition because Harvies managed to create an emotional bond with its consumers.

*"Because the baristas are friendly so I want to endorse it or I don't have anything else for digital content so I snapgram" (interview with Fani Atiqah, Januari 13, 2021).*

The application of viral marketing at Harvies Coffee is done by utilizing the social networking site Instagram. Harvies Coffee utilizes Instagram because it has become the most popular media and very easy to use to find promotions, and reach the public at large.

*"Our target market is those aged 18-30 and they usually use Instagram. Even though we also use Twitter, we don't have the source to maximize our Twitter account" (interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11, 2021).*

In addition, the instagram feature is relatively easier and faster in disseminating information than other media.

*"We can get insight on age, region, gender, everything.. on Instagram. Most of Harvies followers are millennials, students or employees, so they know latest update. We use algorithms or data insight to know our followers' characteristics." (interview with Mutia Rahayu, January 16, 2021).*

Through instagram account users who have registered their account as a business account can also access analytics or insight facilities that allow users to get data related to the performance of their instagram account, such as demographic data, reach and engagement on content, number of profile impressions, number of visits and much more.

The challenge when Harvies Coffee used viral marketing is when Harvies Coffee tries to post content which discusses issues relatively irrelevant to its core business. Like when

using viral marketing by discussing korean drama Start Up, not all Harvies customers are Korean fans.

*“It’s not as smooth as it looks like.. because as I expected before, if one likes K-Pop, another one probably doesn’t, right? So our customers are divided like that. Not all of them like K-Pop but most of them do. So, those who don’t like K-Pop often question [the approach]” (Interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11 2021)*

In overcoming the crisis, Harvies Coffee created a time limit for one content, such as Start Up content only lasted for two weeks, after which Harvies created a counter content to balance it.

*“But we can’t talk about Kdrama all the time, because Harvies is not just any coffee shop, but it’s K-Pop.. so we have to adjust, so we can’t talk about KPop all the time. But we acknowledge that we get high engagement when we talk about KPop.” (interview with Mutia Rahayu, January 16, 2021)*

When I asked about the negative response of viral content about the korean drama, both Tomy and Mutia both confirmed that there were customers who gave negative responses.

*“There was one time when.. umm.. from 10,000 followers, there was only one.. ehhe. But it’s okay. Everyone likes different things. Maybe that one person doesn’t like Kdrama so he/she can’t get what our contents talk about.” (interview with Mutia Rahayu, January 16, 2021)*


When I asked about the negative response of viral content about the Korean drama, both Tomy and Mutia confirmed that there were customers who gave negative responses.

*“When we do something, someone might not like it. That’s normal. So long as it’s not complaint over our products. If it’s about our products, let say, from the scale of 10, 5 complain then it’s a problem. We need to evaluate it. But if it’s about content, I think it’s a temporary thing. It’s not always about Korea. We only rode the wave of Start Up’s popularity. So maybe this one person is not comfortable with it.” (Interview, January 11, 2021).*

For Tomy, as the owner of Harvies, such criticisms are used as evaluation material for Harvies itself in order to be better in the future and to understand its customers better. Harvies also has scheduled a monthly evaluation by disseminating evaluation form or

customer satisfaction research using Google form presented through a link on the instagram account bio @harviescoffee.

**Picture 7 Survey on Customer Satisfaction at Harvies Coffee**



Survey #kawanharvies - Harvies Coffee  
harviescoffee.com

**Harvies**  
coffee

**#kawanharvies .. yuk bantu kami jadi lebih baik 😊**

1. Untuk Produk Harvies , level manis seperti apa yang anda rasakan ?

☐ a. Kurang Manis ☐ b. Sudah Pas ☐ c. Sangat Manis

2. Untuk Produk Harvies, Intensitas Kopi seperti apa yang anda rasakan ?

☐ a. Soft ☐ b. Sudah Pas ☐ c. Strong

Source [www.instagram.com/harviescoffee](https://www.instagram.com/harviescoffee)

From the results of interviews conducted on 3 customers, it can be concluded that the average Harvies customer undergoes both routes on the concept of Elaboration Likelihood Theory, but for the dominant, dominated by peripheral routes. In one interview with harvies coffee consumers researchers found that peer influence is very influential in the selection of Harvies Coffee products.

*“Yes, I knew [about Harvies] from a high school friend” (interview with Dian Islami, January 18, 2021).*

Harvies Coffe's consumer character is dominated by peripheral lines, where consumers are comfortable with the product and there has been a change in attitude over a long period of time.

*“I fell in love with Harvies Coffee’s cream cheese coffee right away. It suits my taste bud. Maybe that’s what makes Harvies Coffee stand out.” (interview with Humaira, January 18, 2021).*

Based on the popular characteristics of Harvies Coffee’s consumers and based on the Elaboration Likelihood theory, the selection of the application of viral marketing is quite appropriate because Harvies’ content on the application of viral marketing fulfilled one form of peripheral message, that is liking.

*“Actually because of their enthusiasm about our promotional stickers, some actually came just to ask for the stickers so they can keep it. It was sticker in the cup of Harvies products, but some of them don’t want the sticker to be stuck on the product because they just want to keep it as a collectible item.” (interview with Tomy Harvie, January 11, 2021).*

In the application of viral Harvies Coffee that utilizes the drama Start Up, it is evident that some customers buy Harvies products just because of the actor's sticker promo from the drama.

*“The concept of viral marketing utilized by Harvies Coffee aims to create brand awareness of its products. The first contemporary coffee brand in Banda Aceh, with the presence of new competitor brands, needs an application to keep the Harvies brand known and remembered by the public. Harvies Coffee is able to provide different quality and service from similar products in Banda Aceh, namely to be a market leader or become the first brand for the category of milk coffee in Banda Aceh. “Actually we want to be the pioneer of a shop that is different, so we started with a non mainstream approach?” (interview with Tomy Harvie, 11 Januari 2021).*

Harvies Coffee has become popular among other new coffee shop brands in Banda Aceh. In addition, franchised coffee brands from the capital city also do not really affect the popularity of Harvies Coffee in the Banda Aceh community. Harvies Coffee managed to become the only local coffee brand which sells iced milk coffee.

*“Harvies has good potential actually, because we're the first to make iced coffee. And I've been lucky to go to Bandung first yes, iced coffee is popular. And I took it to Banda Aceh and it's very popular. And after the boom there will be players who will replicate, the pattern is just like that. Tome, we business people do not see competitors anyway, competitors will do anything, even imitate perhaps. According to what I think, even anything will be imitated. We do not need to focus on the competitors, which we focus is to our market, like you guys for example. What do you like, what kind of atmosphere [do you like], that's what I learned, so we are not trying to be known as the best coffee shop among other coffee shop, that's not the point. We want to be known as well as our customer, that's what matters.” (interview with Tomy Harvie, September 15, 2020).*

Creating brand awareness is not a tough obstacle for Harvies Coffee, the challenge is to maintain the image that has been formed since the beginning, therefore in building its



brand awareness Harvies Coffee is more focused on building good relationships with its customers, including understanding what consumers love, and achieving a high level of emotional bonding.

*"I always prioritize to enrich insights. I like to explore new things, like to watch YouTube, to see what's interesting at the moment so we can connect to followers through social media so we should know what to talk about. We don't always sell something, that way followers will get bored easily. We need something entertaining, games maybe to maintain their level of interest." (interview with Tomy Harvie, September 15, 2020).*

Brand awareness is closely related to how far a product publicity has occurred. It is also related to how high Harvies Coffee products can experience WOM (word of mouth) or the level of desire of consumers to recommend Harvies products. In this case, WOM conducted by Harvies Coffee is WOM that relies on the internet or online known as viral.

In Harvies products, it can be concluded that the Harvies brand is in the third level of brand recall. Harvies itself has a flagship product that is the choice of consumers who are not in other coffee shops, namely Nona Coffee, and Nona Coffee is indeed a best seller, in other words Nona Coffee is the reason why they should go to Harvies Coffee.

*"What's your favourite coffee? Ahh nona coffee is unrivaled. We get that often." (Interview with Mutia Rahayu, January 16, 2021).*

In addition, Harvies engagement when creating viral Korean drama Start Up content through social media instagram reached +719.1% interactions, with post interactions reaching +811.5% (1,659) and story interactions reaching +401.8% with the number of shares reaching 154 shares. The total impressions during the period November to December were as follows, +36.3% interaction with accounts reached increased to 76.7K (+11.4%), content interactions increased to 2,005 (+36.3%) and the addition of followers from 10.1 K to 10.4 K (+0.9%) within the period of just a month.

## DISCUSSION

I use the theory of Elaboration Likelihood with the aim of seeing how the character of consumers Harvies Coffee so Harvies Coffee choose to use the application of viral marketing in promoting its products. In the results discussed earlier, it was found that Harvies consumers are dominated by consumers who go through peripheral persuasion channels, but it does not close the possibility that these consumers will eventually also go through the central persuasion line.

1. On the central route, initially Harvies coffee consumers know Harvies Coffee from the media and other people's recommendations, but in the end consumers choose Harvies because it suits their tastes and needs.
2. On the peripheral route of previous interviews with consumers, it is known that the visuals of Harvies products attract enough attention to be used as content on social media.

According to Cialdini (1994, in the book Dainton & Zelley, 2012), there are seven lines of signs of using messages on peripherals, in the results of the study obtained that of the seven existing peripheral messages, Harvies Coffee only applies two, namely:

1. *Liking*. In this study, said the message was focused on the emphasis on Korean drama Start Up dramas dedicated to KPop fans.
2. *Social Proof*. In this study, messages from the peers have a high influence in targeting new consumers.

These peripheral messages emphasize emotional reactions and usually don't change consumer behavior for long periods of time, but they are temporary or short-term (Massolo, Asyer, 2015).

The application of viral marketing is closely related to word of mouth if used offline but if used online it can be said viral marketing (Situmorang, 2010). According to Klopper (2002) there are six elements of viral marketing, but in this study, the most dominant viral marketing element used by Harvies Coffee there are three elements, namely:

**1. *Exploits Common Motivations And Behaviors***

In this study, Harvies Coffee in the application of the first viral marketing in 2019, utilized the song Dance Monkey as a jingle melody in a promotional video of Harvies Coffee's product in collaboration with @khaliltoktok, where Khalil's name at the time as a stand-up comedian was on the rise. Dance Monkey song itself is a song released by Australian singers Tones and I. In the same year, the song received quite good attention from the world, reported from [Billboard.com](https://www.billboard.com) since its release the song Dance Monkey has broken the record to peak in the top 10 in a week and heard more than 25 million times through Spotify worldwide. The virality of this song is utilized by Harvies Coffee so that Harvies Coffee's content goes viral as well.

**2. *Utilizes Existing Communication Networks***

In this study Harvies Coffee has benefited from reviews of twitter accounts @IloveAceh about its coffee shops so that it makes Harvies Coffee noticed at by National TV Net TV and from the coverage Harvies get attention or

awareness from the public, in addition to this element Harvies also make use of its good relationship with content creator @khaliltoktok to be able to convey the marketing message of its products easily, in addition to human relationships, Harvies Coffeee also utilizes the social media network instagram as a promotional media. Harvies Coffee chose instagram because instagram currently holds a large percentage on the social network. Instagram is able to have a wide influence (Budiman, 2017).

### **3. *Takes advantage of others resources***

In the viral marketing conducted by Harvies Coffee in 2020, Harvies Coffee utilizes the existing source of viral Korean drama Start Up.

### **4. *Provides for effortless transfer to other***

In this element Harvies Coffee uses Instagram to convey its marketing messages, the reason is because instagram has complex features but easy to use, as in the insta story feature that is often used by Harvies, there is a reply, share and reaction feature that makes it very easy for Harvies to track the characteristics of its customers, these features also make it easier for Harvies Coffee followers to share Harvies messages/uploads to others with just one click. This interaction can be seen from the level of insight obtained by Harvies Coffee. In addition to utilizing the medium of messaging, Harvies himself also often creates content using common languages so that it is easy to be understood by his followers, such as replacing the word brewing so that the message can be delivered easily and can be forwarded back without the need for effort and a large cost. In addition, with a special hashtag for harvies customer designation that is #KawanHarvies make it easier to remember the brand Harvies Coffee and have an emotional closeness to the brand.

In general, the application of viral marketing run by Harvies Coffee including viral marketing high integration strategy, has an application in involving consumers directly to new consumers (Skrob, 2005). Consumer engagement here is meant by the postings of Harvies content on their respective social media, the important thing in the success of running viral marketing, is with consumer engagement (Wahyuni, 2016)

## **Supporting factors of Viral Marketing**

Psychological factors that influence customers to disseminate satisfaction about a product to the community (Situmorang, 2010) is:

1. *Peer Pressure*. In this case the researchers concluded that some consumers of Harvies Coffee when doing word of mouth is based on peer pressure factor, where most of them get recommendations from peers.
2. *Prestise*. From the results of the research that has been discussed, some of the reasons consumers want to spread the message about Harvies on social media is because Harvies is considered a cool brand among millennials.

### How It Became Viral

The steps of viral marketing in Harvies Coffee, according to Richardson (2006) are:

1. *Receive*. Harvies customers receive the messages through instastory posts on Instagram account @harviescoffee.
2. *View*. On Harvies insta story data recorded viewers traces on the insight and impressions feature.
3. *Engage*. This stage can be seen from how many followers interact with @harviescoffee account, through the number of replies, comments and likes.
4. *Forward*. On business Instagram, users can see the number of content shares through Instagram insights.

However, in that stage it could happen or followers do not proceed to the next stages. At Harvies Coffee, the process went viral in new media.

### Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is related to the strong brand to certain signals, memories, and customers are able to distinguish the brand from other products (Keller, 2013).

There are four stages of brand awareness according to Rangkuti (2004). According to the results of the researcher interviews with all informants in this study, researchers concluded that the Harvies brand is in the third level of brand recall. Based on how to measure the success of brand awareness according to RedComm Indonesia, Harvies can be seen from the description of instagram insight data @harviescoffee through reach and mentions.

Harvies itself has a flagship product that is the choice of consumers who are not in other coffee shops, namely Nona Coffee, and Nona Coffee is indeed a best seller, in other words Nona Coffee is the reason why it should go to Harvies Coffee, so the Harvies Coffee brand always appears among other brands when I make initial observations on a number of USK students.

## CONCLUSION

Harvies Coffee has implemented viral marketing at least thrice, namely in 2014, 2019 and at the end of 2020. The first viral marketing happened without any planning, while the second and third viral marketing is done with certain stages although not neatly structured. Viral marketing at Harvies Coffee can successfully build brand awareness because the word of mouth process is successfully carried out in accordance with the factors that affect it. Based on the results of the study, the application of viral that reaches the forward stage or discussed using word of mouth. In this case, through social media Instagram is the third viral application when Harvies Coffee utilizes the viral drama Korea Start Up. This is marked by the increasing level of impressions on instagram insights that reached +36.3. Data obtained from all informants, I concluded that Harvies brand is in the third level of the pyramid of brand awareness according to Rangkuti (2004) namely brand recall, the stage at which a brand has actually reached the top of mind. Efforts to do viral marketing for familiar brands such as Harvies Coffee do not cost a lot. Efforts made in creating brand awareness focus on how to maintain the existing brand image so that it is irreplaceable with new brands. Based on 6 elements of viral marketing by Klopper (2002), the most dominant viral marketing element used by Harvies Coffee exploits common motivations and behaviors, taking advantage of other resources. Utilizes existing communication networks and provides for effortless transfer to others. Whereas if viewed based on the division of viral marketing group viral marketing strategy Harvies Coffee belongs to the group of high integration strategy.

## REFERENCE

- Adriyan, I. (2018). *Viral Marketing Sebagai Strategi Dalam Meningkatkan Brand Awareness (Studi Deskriptif Kualitatif pada Fanpage Facebook Indihome witel Yogyakarta)*. Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.
- Akmal, S., & Fairusy, M.A. (Eds). (2018) *DE ATJEHERS: Dari Serambi Mekkah ke Serambi Kopi*. Banda Aceh: Padebooks
- APJII. (2019). *Penetrasi & Profil Perilaku Pengguna Internet Indonesia*. Retrieved April 2, 2020, from <https://apji.or.id/survei2018s/download/TK5oJYBSyd8iqHA2eCh4FsGELm3ubj>
- Atmaja, L. S. (2008). *Teori & Praktik Manajemen Keuangan*. Yogyakarta: Andi Offset.
- Atmoko, B. D. (2012). *Instagram Handbook*. Jakarta: Media Kita.
- Budiman, V. C. (2017). *Strategi Viral Marketing Produk Chitato Indomie di Instagram Dalam Membangun Brand Awareness* [Skripsi, Universitas Multimedia Nusantara]. UMN Repository. <https://kc.umn.ac.id/2699/1/CHRISTOPHER%20VARIAN-%2013140110300%20READ%20ONLY.pdf>
- Dainton, M., & Zelle, E. D. (2012). *Applying Communication Theory in Professional Life* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Durianto, D., Sugianto, & Sitinjak, T. (2001). *Strategi Menaklukan Pasar : Melalui Riset Ekuitas dan Prilaku Merek*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Emzir. (2012). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif Analisis Data*. Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Fajariah, N., Thoyib, A., & Rachman, F. (2016). Pengaruh Brand Awareness, Perceived Quality, dan Brand Image terhadap Brand Loyalty pada Generasi Y di Indonesia. *Jurnal Aplikasi Manajemen*, 14(3), 471–480. <https://doi.org/10.18202/jam23026332.14.3.08>
- Hamdani, M. Y., & Mawardi, M. K. (2018). Pengaruh viral marketing terhadap kepercayaan konsumen serta dampaknya terhadap keputusan pembelian. *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis*, 60(1), 163–171.
- Hariyanti, N. T., & Wirapraja, A. (2018). Pengaruh Influencer Marketing Sebagai Strategi Pemasaran Digital Era Moderen (Sebuah Studi Literatur). *Jurnal Eksekutif*, 15(1), 133–146.
- Helm, S. (2000). Viral Marketing - Establishing Customer Relationships by "Word-of-mouth." *Electronic Markets*, 10(3), 158–161. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10196780050177053>
- Hermawan, K. (2010). *Grow with Character: The Model Marketing*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Irwandy, D., & Rachmawati, D. (2018). Penerapan Elaboration Likelihood Theory Dalam Mempengaruhi Konsumen Pada Pemilihan Produk Telepon Genggam. *WACANA, Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi*, 17(2), 201. <https://doi.org/10.32509/wacana.v17i2.644>
- Kasali, R. (2017). *Disruption*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Keller, K. L. (2013). *Strategic brand management: building, measuring, and managing brand equity* (4th ed). Boston: Pearson.
- Klopper, H. B. (2002). Viral marketing: a powerful, but dangerous marketing tool. *SA Journal of Information Management*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajim.v4i2.159>

- Littlejohn, S., & Foss, K. (2009). *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412959384>
- Massolo, A. N. (2015). *Hubungan Tingkat Kredibilitas Komunikator dengan Minat Beli Listrik Pintar (Studi Korelasi Antara Tingkat Kredibilitas Komunikator Program Sosialisasi Listrik Pintar PT. PLN (Persero) APJ Yogyakarta dengan Minat Beli Masyarakat Pedukuhan Sawah untuk Menggunakan Listrik Pintar*. [Undergraduate Thesis, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta]. UAJY. <http://e-journal.uajy.ac.id/7832/>
- Norhabiba, F. (2019). Aplikasi Elaboration Likelihood Model Theory dalam Iklan Calon Gubernur 2018 terhadap Perilaku Memilih. *KANAL: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 6(2), 101. <https://doi.org/10.21070/kanal.v6i2.1932>
- Net Lifestyle. (2014, Dec. 14). *Weekend List – Kafe Kopi Harvies Banda Aceh* [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8GpEAb6d2c>
- Nurlaela, T. S. (2013). *Efektifitas Viral Marketing Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian PT.ABC*. [Undergraduate Thesis, Universitas Widyatama]. <https://repository.widyatama.ac.id/xmlui/handle/123456789/2575>
- Paramamita, P.D., Wigati, M.H., Oktavianingsih, T., & Sanjaya, H. (2015). *Elaboration Likelihood Model* [Unpublished Manuscript] Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta. <https://www.coursehero.com/file/padfqv/KRITIK-KELOMPOK-Elaboration-Likelihood-Model-ELM-seolah-olah-mengasumsikan/>
- Rangkuti, F. (2004). *Manajemen Persediaan Aplikasi di Bidang Bisnis*. Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Rayport, J. (1996). The Virus Marketing. Retrieved April 2, 2021, from <https://www.fastcompany.com/27701/virus-marketing>
- Richardson, S. A., Sloan, R. G., Soliman, M. T., & Tuna, I. (2006). The implications of accounting distortions and growth for accruals and profitability. *Accounting Review*, 81(3), 713–743. <https://doi.org/10.2308/accr.2006.81.3.713>
- Ritzer, G. (2008). *Sociological Theory* (8th ed.). New York: The Mc Graw Hill Company.
- Situmorang, J. R. (2010). Pemasaran Viral – Viral Marketing, *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis*, 6(1), 63–75. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.26593/jab.v6i1.369.%25p>
- Skrob, J. R. (2005). *Open Source and Viral Marketing: The viral marketing concept as a model for open source software to reach the critical mass for global brand awareness based on the example of TYPO3* [Unpublished Manuscript, University of Applied Science Kufstein, Austria]. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.494.8779&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Wahyuni, I. (2016). *Strategi Viral Marketing Melalui Instagram Dalam Meningkatkan Penjualan (Studi Deskriptif Kualitatif pada Selfie Contest Avoskin Beauty)*. [Undergraduate Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga]. <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/20142/>
- Yasa, I.N. (2018). Peran dan Upaya Pengembangan Literasi Informasi Peroustakaan Sekolah Pada Era Disrupsi. *Arcaya Pustaka*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.23887/ap.v5i2.17410>

## Identification of Relationship Maintenance in Chinese Muslim Marriages in Film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap”

**Silvia Pristianita & Rustono Farady Marta**

Magister Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Bunda Mulia

Email: [silvia.pristianita98@gmail.com](mailto:silvia.pristianita98@gmail.com), [rmarta@bundamulia.ac.id](mailto:rmarta@bundamulia.ac.id)

*Received May 11, 2021; Revised Jun. 26, 2021; Accepted Jun 30, 2021*

### Abstract

Culture and reality in society are often described in various ways, one of which is through literary works such as films. The film is one of the media that is often used to convey the implied meaning and message. “Bidadari Mencari Sayap” is one of the films shown on the side streams of the Disney+ platform. “Bidadari Mencari Sayap,” which officially aired on 2 October 2020, portray a very complex wedding story. This film tells the story of a household between a Muslim husband and wife and a Chinese convert. This study will analyse the film using qualitative methods and interpretative paradigms. In addition, the author will use relational maintenance from Laura Stanford and Canary, which consists of ten elements in maintaining relationships, namely positivity, openness, assurance, sharing tasks, social networks, join activities, mediated communication, avoidance, antisocial and humour. The explanation is elaborated with a grand syntagmatic from Christian Metz Semiotics, namely autonomous shot, the parallel syntagm, the bracketing syntagm, the descriptive syntagm, the alternating syntagm, the scene, and the scene episodic sequence, and the ordinary sequence. The research results show that the film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap” applies eight of the ten elements of relational maintenance theories that produce four syntagms and three autonomous shots with various types, namely subjective insert, explanatory insert also displaced diegetic. The differences between the two characters do not become a barrier, and each partner has their respective duties to maintain the relationship that has been built together.

**Keywords:** Christian Metz Semiotics; Relational Maintenance Theory; Film; “Bidadari Mencari Sayap”

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a multicultural country and consists of various ethnicities, tribes, and cultures with various values. Culture and realities that exist in society are often depicted in various forms of literary works, one of which is film. Movies are part of pop cultures, just like music, books, and others (Suryanto, 2016). According to Fanananie (2001), literary works can be understood through three perspectives. The first perspective categorises literary works as a form of social document that represents the situation when the literary work was created. In other words, a literary work describes the time when the work was created. The second perspective is that a literary work is a reflection of the social



conditions of the author of the work. In other words, literary works are a personal reflection of the author and his views on the social reality that occurs. The third perspective is that a literary work is a manifestation of social reality that does occur in society. Literary work can be said to be an embodiment of fiction made by the author who presents various realities and facts in life but is added to the story of the author's imagination (Sitompul and Simaremar, 2017).

Various events and stories from the past to cultural issues are often the inspiration for making a film story. Various points of view and values that are believed by some members of society can be represented by the film. Many elements are merged into one in a film so that the audience is actually required to be more critical to be able to understand the ideology and moral messages to the representation of everyday life implied in the films they watch (Oktavianus, 2018). This is, of course, in line with the function of the film, which is informative, social, educative, and persuasive. Films are felt to have a significant impact on people's lives because they are produced based on cultural products, which of course, have various meanings (Lilis et al., 2017). If studied with semiotics, the film is a text contained at the level of markers. The film consists of a series of images and images that describe activities that actually occur in reality (Ali, 2019).

*"Bidadari Mencari Sayap"* is a film made by PT MD Pictures Tbk. in collaboration with Citra Cinema. The film, which premiered on Disney+ Hotstar on 2 October 2020, depicts the complexity of the story of households of different ethnicities and the process of religious adjustment. The film *"Bidadari Mencari Sayap"* is a drama genre. Many drama genres are produced. After all, drama can reach a wider audience because it is considered relevant to their daily lives. Films with a drama genre tend to have a related theme, story, character, and atmosphere with the society (Sidabutar, 2019). The title of the film *"Bidadari Mencari Sayap"* turns out to have its own story. Aria Kusumadewa as the director of this film, said that the title was given as a gift by one of the directors who succeeded in leading Indonesia to become an Oscar nomination for the Best International Feature Film category in 2020, namely Garin Nugroho (Diananto, 2020).

Aria Kusumadewa tells the story of a married couple who have different cultural backgrounds in this film. Complexity occurs in Reza's married life as a husband who is of Arab descent who is married to Angela, a woman of Chinese descent who chooses to convert to Islam to marry Reza. The differences that exist make various conflicts actually occur in their domestic life (Sari, 2020). In general, marriage in Indonesia is the inner and outer bond of a man and a woman. Marriage is a commitment that is built together between the prospective husband and wife. In Indonesia, marriages often occur between ethnic groups, religions, and even religions because Indonesia has a multicultural society of various races, ethnicities, and religions (Abadi et al., 2017).

Adjusting from the old religion to the new religion can sometimes cause problems after a religious conversion. This is because changes to self-identity are undoubtedly difficult to do, especially if the old identity has become a habit during the previous lifetime.

Problems not only come from the internal side, such as family, but can also come from the external side such as the wider community's response regarding the decisions taken (Abdilah and Sjafé'i, 2019). In reality, being a Chinese Muslim is not an easy decision because they are considered a minority within a minority or a double minority. So, the rejection does not only occur from the family, but the presence of Chinese Muslims is also not necessarily acceptable for the Muslim community (Zuhri and Wahyudi, 2019). In life, conflict can be characterised by disagreements or differences. Conflict can create tension or other difficulties between two or more parties (Pertiwi et al., 2020). In fact, in 2020, in Indonesia, 176,683 couples divorced due to ongoing disputes and quarrels (BPS, 2021)(BPS, 2021)(BPS, 2021).

The main focus in this article is to dissect the description of relationship maintenance theory from Laura Stanford and Canary, which focuses on how to keep relationships in the desired state. Laura and Canary divide their theory into ten elements (Nurhasanah and Naryono, 2017). The film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*," which presents the story of a married couple with different cultural backgrounds, converts to Islam and Muslim, becomes an interesting blend in providing an implied meaning about the pattern of maintaining relationships in the context of differences and conflicts that arise in it. In addition to using relationship maintenance theory, this study also uses Christian Metz's semiotics with eight syntagmas, namely the autonomous shot, the parallel syntagm, the bracketing syntagm, the descriptive syntagm, the alternating syntagm, the scene, the episodic sequence, and the ordinary sequence. The large syntagmatic category from Christian Metz's semiotics is used to describe the meaning contained in the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*."

In married life, conflict is a common condition. In one study conducted by Gurin, conflict can occur in married life. As many as 45% of married people agree that in life together there will be various problems. Meanwhile, 32% of married couples said that they were very happy and had never experienced disagreements (B et al., 2018). Conflict in a relationship can occur due to various factors, both internally and externally. Internal factors that can influence the occurrence of conflict are physical, personality, and economic, social, and cultural differences in status, especially when there is a conflict and the difference is unacceptable to the parties involved. External factors are conflicts that occur because there are third parties or other external parties in a relationship (Prameswari, 2017).

Canary explains that relational maintenance is done to protect a relationship so that it is maintained and stable (Canary & Yum, 2015). The relational maintenance theory proposed by Laura Stanford and Canary has ten elements to maintain and also maintain a relationship (Nurhasanah & Naryono, 2017). The ten elements consist of positivity, openness, assurance, sharing tasks, social networks, join activities, mediated communication, avoidance, antisocial and humour.

Positivity is a positive attitude in a person to make a partner feel happy, such as giving praise and giving freedom to partners to be themselves. Partners must play a pleasant person and encourage their partner as one of their closest people. Openness is a time when couples can discuss, open up, and listen to each other, allowing an exchange of ideas. Openness is also known as deep talk, which is honest talk from the bottom of the heart.

Assurance is the attitude of a partner that provides certainty and assurance regarding a commitment to foster trust in the partner. Sharing tasks are actions that are carried out by couples together. Sharing tasks can also be interpreted as a couple knowing their respective roles and running them well, for example, doing work together and dividing tasks.

The social network is a couple's attitude to get closer and spend time communicating with people around their partner. In fact, in maintaining relationships with our partners, we must also establish relationships with people who are around our partners, such as family or friends.

Joint activities are couples who spend time together, such as eating together, chatting, etc. Mediated communication is communication with a partner that is done through media, such as telephone, letter, video call and others. Avoidance is an act of avoiding things that are not liked by your partner and allow it to trigger a conflict.

Antisocial is an attitude that shows unfriendliness towards a partner or even the use of violence. This attitude must, of course, be avoided in resolving a problem or conflict. Humour is the attitude of a partner to lighten the mood to make the relationship more enjoyable.

Semiotics is basically a sign science that is used to analyse the signs that are around us. Signs in semiotics are not signs in the literal sense, but more broadly, such as the structure of literary works, films, buildings, and other signs in society (Tianotak & Asy'ari, 2019). One of the philosophers who came from France, Christian Metz, is the creator of film semiotics. The meaning of film semiotics described by Metz is conveyed through the denotative elements contained in the film. Metz argues that film semiotics means that films combine images and sounds that form a semantic continuity (Kusuma Dewi et al., 2017).

Language is all forms of communication. In this case, cinema can be interpreted as a language system. This statement is in accordance with Metz's (1991) statement, namely "it is not because the cinema is a language that it can tell us such fine stories, but rather it has become a language because it has been told such fine stories" (Marta and Robin,

2019). Metz popularised the large syntagmatic category, which consists of eight syntagms, namely the autonomous shot, the parallel syntagm, the bracketing syntagm, the descriptive syntagm, the alternating syntagm, the scene, the episodic sequence, and the ordinary sequence (Erviannisa and Christantyawati, 2017).

The autonomous shot is a syntagm consisting of one shot. The shot can be a single shot sequence. There are four types of inserts. The first insert is a non-diegetic insert or the insertion of an insert that has absolutely no space and time continuity in the film. The second insert is the subjective insert, which is a shot that depicts a personal point of view such as past memories, imagining things, dreaming, or hallucinating. The third insert is displaced diegetic, which is the insertion of a shot in space and time, where the shot is outside the scene. The third insert is an explanatory insert which is an insert that aims to explain events to the audience.

Parallel syntagma is a syntagma that consists of combining shots and images that have contrasting differences in a scene. Syntagm brackets combine images that share a common theme and represent examples of an order of reality. Descriptive syntagma is a syntagma that has continuity in space and time and describes a series of events. Alternating syntagma is a syntagma that has more than one shot and also describes two different scenes that occur alternately and have space and time relationships.

The scene is a collection of shots that chronologically displays a particular scene about an event, its action and its depiction as if not paused. The episodic sequence is a linear syntagm but does not occur continuously and consists of more than one shot. This syntagm tends to talk about one thing and also the same goal. Ordinary sequences consist of more than one shot that is chronological in nature which emphasises the critical points of an ongoing scene (Ali, 2019).

## METHODS

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach, namely the process of scientific investigation aimed at obtaining a holistic understanding of the existing problems (Mujahidah & Jaunedi, 2021). Paradigm is a fundamental way of perceiving thought. In cross-cultural communication, there are three main paradigms, namely the functional paradigm, the interpretive paradigm, and also the critical paradigm (Fernando et al., 2020). Qualitative research has several characteristics. The first key instrument of research is the person conducting the research. Qualitative research must be able to describe an object or phenomenon in the form of a narrative. In addition, qualitative research focuses on the process as well as the results of the research. Then, research data analysis was carried out inductively and in-depth exploration (Ghony & Almanshur, 2010). The paradigm used in this study is the interpretive paradigm. That is, this study did not

test hypotheses or make predictions. Research that has a descriptive nature describes an event or situation that is currently happening. The interpretive paradigm basically understands the behaviour of humans or creates an understanding and interpretation of something (Isnaini & Arzak, 2019).

The object of analysis in this research was a text in the form of a film entitled “Bidadari Mencari Sayap,” which is analysed using the semiotic tradition. Semiotics is a branch of science that focuses on studying signs. Signs are expected to convey messages, both verbally and non-verbally (Indriani and Rosfiantika, 2018). The author divided the film, which has a duration of 89 minutes, into sequences, scenes and shots. Sequence, scene and shot will then be selected as the unit of analysis of the study based on the criteria that best suit the aims and objectives of this study, namely finding the values of maintaining relationships in Chinese Muslim marriages and describing the large syntagmatic category of Christian Metz.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on observations of the film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap,” several ways of maintaining relationships were found in the relationship between Muslim husband and wife and Chinese converts who were often shown after the conflict. Based on the ten elements in relational maintenance theory, the film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap” broadly uses eight elements: openness, assurance, sharing tasks, social networks, joint activities, mediated communication, avoidance, and humour.

The visualisation of the concept of maintaining relationships in the film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap” is applied using the large syntagmatic category from Christian Metz, which produces four syntagms and three autonomous shots to describe each shot and scene that describes the relational maintenance theory.

**Table 1. Mapping Relational Maintenances Theories in the Film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap”**

No.	Scene Time Mark	<i>Relational Maintenances Theories</i>									
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	03.25 - 03.31								V		
2	04.43 - 04.53								V		
3	08.29 - 10.59					V					
4	12.39 - 13.34	V					V				
5	13.47 - 14.33										V
6	24.35 - 25.50	V									
7	26.51 - 29.29					V					
8	36.32								V		
9	43.57								V		
10	42.39 - 42.56								V		
11	48.43 - 48.50				V						
12	49.48 - 49.57				V						
13	57.05 - 57.36								V		
14	59. 14 - 59.33							V			
15	01.03.55 - 01.04.06			V							
16	01.22.53 - 01.25.50			V							

*Note: (A) Openness; (B) Positivity; (C) Assurance; (D) Sharing Task; (E) Social Network; (F) Join Activities; (G) Mediated Communication; (H) Avoidance; (I) Anti Social; (J) Humor*

In Table 1, it can be seen that there are two scenes in the film “Bidadari Mencari Sayap”, which depicts openness, assurance, sharing tasks, social networks, and one scene depicts joint activities, mediated communication and humour. In the movie “Bidadari Mencari Sayap,” avoidance is the most common maintenance. There are six scenes in the film that indicate avoidance.

**Table 2. Mapping The Large Syntagmatic Category**

No.	Scene Time Mark	<i>Semiotika Christian Metz</i>								
		I	II	II	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
1	03.25 - 03.31							V		
2	04.43 - 04.53							V		
3	08.29 - 10.59							V		
4	12.39 - 13.34							V		
5	13.47 - 14.33							V		
6	24.35 - 25.50							V		
7	26.51 - 29.29							V		
8	36.32	V								
9	43.57	V								
10	42.39 - 42.56		V							
11	48.43 - 48.50	V								
12	49.48 - 49.57	V								
13	57.05 - 57.36							V		
14	59. 14 - 59.33						V			
15	01.03.55 - 01.04.06							V		
16	01.22.53 - 01.25.50								V	

*Note: (I) Autonomous Shot; (II) The Parallel Syntagm; (III) The Bracketing Syntagm; (IV) The Descriptive Syntagm; (V) The Descriptive Syntagm; (VI) The Alternating Syntagm; (VII) The Scene; (VIII) Episodic Sequence; (IX) Ordinary Sequence*

Based on the large syntagmatic category from Christian Metz, four scenes use autonomous shots, and one scene uses parallel syntagm, alternating syntagm, and episodic sequences. In describing the concept of relational maintenance, it was found the use of nine scenes. The following section describes the data presented in Tables 1 and 2 specifically regarding Christian Metz's semiotics and relational maintenance theories from the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*."

### **Avoidance**

Avoidance is the attitude of a partner who avoids certain circumstances or particular issues to prevent conflict. This attitude is shown in several scenes in the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*."

Figure 1. Scene - 03.21 and 03.25



The time mark 03.25 – 03.31 describes the moment when Angela's sister complained about the condition of Angela's small and cramped house, which made the atmosphere at home feel cramped if visited by many people. As soon as her sister spoke like that, Angela immediately warned her sister to lower her voice so that her husband would not hear her. Angela felt that everyone in the house was very sensitive, both husband and Babah. Thus, Angela was afraid that her older sister's words would invite conflict if they were continued. The cut can be categorised as a scene because it consists of several shots that tell an event in sequence and appear without pause.

Avoidance in the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*" is shown several times. At the time mark 04.43 – 04.53, after Babah asked for the food he ordered, Angela's sister brought Babah to pick it up. After that, Angela asked what food her Babah ordered. When she found out that the food ordered was pork, Angela immediately frowned and complained to her sister, saying, "if my husband finds out, it can be bad." From the conversation and the scene, it can be seen that Angela wants to avoid the situation currently happening, but she cannot avoid it because her sister brought Babah's meat without telling Angela first. The scene is a scene because it is still continuous with the previous scene in place, time and event.

The third avoidance sign is found in the same two shots but inserted at different times, namely at 36.32 and 43.57 minutes. Reza's actions as a husband are avoidance because he does not pick up Angela's phone, even though he knows that his wife is calling. Reza personally did this because of the secret he kept. Since Reza resigned from the office, he did not tell Angela anything and worked as an online driver to earn a side income. This part is an explanatory insert because it shows Angela calling in one short shot. The shot was inserted when Reza was working and carrying passengers in his car, making it impossible for Reza to pick up his wife's phone, who did not even know that he had changed jobs to become a driver.



**Figure 2. *Parallel Syntagma* 42.36 and 42.42**

Figure 2 is a parallel syntagma which is also avoidance. The conversation that Angela and her older sister had had a stark contrast to their condition. In the scene, Angela's sister is sitting relaxing by the pool while enjoying juice. He offers Angela a job in her husband's office. Meanwhile, in another shot, Angela is seen picking up the phone outside the house. When she heard about the job offer from her sister, Angela still wanted to think first because she doubted that her husband would agree with the decision she was about to take at that time. Angela, who knew that her husband did not like it when he worked, did not immediately accept the job offer given by her sister.

**Figure 3. *Scene* 57.05, 57.13, 57.28, and 57.36**

The last scene that depicts avoidance occurs at minutes 57.05 – 57.36 when Reza delivers one of his boarding friends who has used his online driver service several times. The woman named Soraya was in a drunken state, expressed her feelings to Reza. Not only expressing her feelings, but Soraya also did not hesitate to invite Reza to stay in her room. Reza, who felt that this was wrong and should not be done, immediately refused Soraya's invitation to sleep together and chose to rest in their respective rooms. At minute 57.36,

we can also see that Reza felt uncomfortable after Soraya suddenly kissed him on the cheek before entering his boarding room. The scene is a scene because it is a continuous series of shots and describes an event that is related and without pause.

### ***Social Networks***

When it comes to maintaining a relationship with a partner, the most important thing besides getting closer and understanding the partner is to approach the people around that partner. This is also depicted in the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*." Both Reza and Angela were seen eating together with their respective families. Even though they looked uncomfortable, Reza and Angela continued to eat together with their families in the end.

**Figure 4. Scene - 08.27, 08.33, 27.09 and 27.57**



The scene at the beginning of the film shows Reza, who is eating with Angela's family during the Chinese New Year celebration. Unlike Angela's family, who wear red clothes typical of Chinese New Year celebrations, Reza wears blue clothes. Even though at first he refused to join the meal so that his wife could be closer to the family, Reza still attended the meal together and responded to various conversations addressed to him.

Not only Reza, but the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*" also depicts Angela having dinner with Reza's family, who have Arab ancestry. Angela, who had previously refused to join the meal together, finally continued to eat together with her husband's family. When she came to Reza's family home, Angela brought food for Reza's parents. Unfortunately, Angela feels uncomfortable because Reza's mother often comments on her appearance, which is still not wearing the hijab, unlike Reza's father, who tends to understand. After all, change requires a process that is not instant. The depiction of the two family meals is shown in the form of a scene, which is a combination of several successive shots and seems to have no pause.

### *Openness*

In this scene, Angela and Reza are washing dishes while discussing an issue. Angela questioned the views and reasons why pork is considered haram in Islam. The discussion that initially sparked the debate was finally resolved amicably. At the time mark 12:39 to 13:34, Reza and Angela both expressed their feelings. Reza felt Angela began to pressure him as Babah did. Hearing Reza's explanation, Angela apologised and explained to Reza that she actually just wanted to know more because she is a convert and still does not understand much of the teachings of Islam in detail. Hearing Angela's explanation, Reza also apologised to Angela.

The second scene occurred at minutes 24.35 to 25.50. Previously, Reza looked annoyed because of the dog in the yard and because his wife can not be contacted all day. The debate happened again when Angela also asked Reza the same thing. The debate was resolved because Angela finally tried to explain that she had to go to the doctor because of her allergies. Hearing Angela's explanation, Reza looked regretful and began to listen to his wife's story about the actual incident. Reza looks guilty and approaches his wife.

### *Humour*

**Figure 5. Scene - 13.55, 14.09 and 14.20**

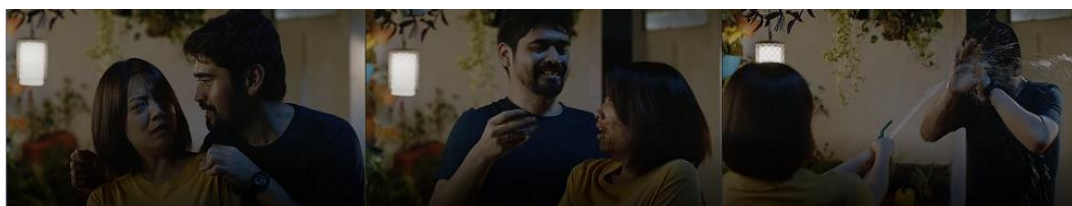


Figure 5 is a cut scene that takes place after the debate about pigs which is considered haram in Islam to have to wash everything that pigs touch with the soil. Angela felt that Reza was too emotional when explaining the issue, even though Angela was a convert who still did not understand the rules in Islam. Reza, who realised his mistake, finally tried to break the tense atmosphere by teasing Angela. Not consumed by Reza's seduction, Angela begins beating herself, who feels less than perfect as a wife. Angela's statement made Reza cover Angela's mouth with his hands still covered with dirt. After that, Angela replied to Reza's actions by pouring water from the hose he was using.

### *Sharing Task*

A partner must know the duties and roles in a relationship. During the fight, Reza left the house for a while and could not be contacted. However, Reza does not necessarily forget his duties as husband and head of the family. The time mark 48.43-48.50 portray when Babah wants to pay the rent from Angela and Reza's house, which he thought has not been paid. Shortly after that, the landlord immediately said that Reza had paid the rent

via bank transfer. This action indicated that Reza was not negligent in carrying out his duties as a husband, even though he was not at home. He is still doing his job well.

Reza's second action, which shows sharing tasks, is when he transfers money to Angela at the time mark 49.48 to 49.57. The shot includes a subjective insert because it was taken from the point of view of Angela, who was reading an incoming text message from Reza. The two shots that depict sharing tasks use autonomous shots, namely displaced diegetic and subjective insert.

### ***Mediated Communication***

As the name implies, mediated communication is communication that is carried out through certain media. In order to maintain a relationship with his wife, who was not doing well, plus he did not come home, and there was no news, Reza finally tried to contact Angela via cellphone chat.

**Figure 6. Alternating Syntagma - 59.16 and 59.28**



The conversation that took place between Reza and Angel during minutes 59.14 to 59.33 was included as an alternating syntagma because it featured two activities carried out at the same time, namely when Angela and Reza both replied to the chat at the same time but in different places.

### ***Joint Activities***

Joint activities are the actions of couples who do something together. In the movie "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*," at the time mark 12.39 - 13.34, Reza and Angela clean the plates they have used for the Chinese New Year celebration at their home together. This is done to ease the burden of the partner.

### ***Assurance***

Assurance is the act of showing a clear commitment in a relationship. At minutes 01.03.53 to 01.04.11, there is a scene that shows assurance. In this scene, it is depicted that Reza returns home and is greeted by Angela with a warm gaze and hug. After that,

they together have sex which is certainly not shown in the film. This scene is given a fade-out effect, and the scene changes to the next day.

**Figure 7. Episodic Sequence – 01.22.53, 01.23.18, 01.23.29, 01.23.33, 01.23.41, 01.23.54, 01.24.07, 01.24.45, 01.25.01, 01.25.09, 01.25 10, and 01.25.18**



The closing part of the film “*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*” includes assurance when Reza, who left Angela, returns and wants to start again. The umbrella that Reza took was a substitute for the umbrella gift that Reza gave him, which was broken when they fought. The shots in this scene can be categorised as episodic sequences due to the complete depiction of events, starting from Reza appearing from the crowd and looking for Angela, taking the umbrella, closing the umbrella, running towards Angela until they hugged.



## CONCLUSIONS

**Table 2. Relational Maintenances Theories & Christian Metz Semiotics Summary**

No.	Scene Time Mark	Relational Maintenances Theories & Christian Metz Semiotic												
		A	I	C	II	D	VI	E	VII	F	VIII	G	H	J
1	03.25 - 03.31								V				V	
2	04.43 - 04.53								V				V	
3	08.29 - 10.59							V	V					
4	12.39 - 13.34	V							V	V				
5	13.47 - 14.33								V					V
6	24.35 - 25.50	V							V					
7	26.51 - 29.29							V	V					
8	36.32		V										V	
9	43.57		V										V	
10	42.39 - 42.56				V								V	
11	48.43 - 48.50		V			V								
12	49.48 - 49.57		V			V								
13	57.05 - 57.36								V				V	
14	59. 14 - 59.33						V					V		
15	01.03.55 - 01.04.06			V					V					
16	01.22.53 - 01.25.50			V							V			

Note: (A) Openness; (I) Autonomous Shot; (C) Assurance; (II) The Parallel Syntagm ;(D) Sharing Task; (VI) The Alternating Syntagm; (E) Social Network; (VII) The Scene; (F) Join Activities; (VIII) Episodic Sequence; (G) Mediated Communication; (H) Avoidance; (J) Humor

Based on the analysis results, in the film “*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*,” it was found that relational maintenance theories were displayed using four syntagms and three autonomous shots. The act of maintaining a relationship that is most often shown in the film “*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*” is avoidance, which is five times. Avoidance is shown in some parts by using scenes, autonomous shot explanatory inserts, and parallel syntagma. Social networks and also openness in maintaining a relationship are shown twice, each using the scene.

In the movie “*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*,” the action is shown once using a scene. In addition, the sharing task is displayed twice using an autonomous shot, and the difference is the type of autonomous shot used. The first shot is a displaced dietetic and the second is a subjective insert. In the film “*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*”, an alternating syntagma is also shown when the two characters are communicating using the chat feature via a smartphone. Joint activities are carried out once using a scene. Finally, assurance is shown twice. The first scene is shown using a scene, and the second scene using an episodic sequence.

Of the ten elements of relational maintenance theories, the film “*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*” uses eight elements. Avoidance is a way of maintaining relationships that are most often shown in films, where each partner prevents conflict from occurring by avoiding the cause of the conflict. In addition, other values shown are openness. Indeed,

in building a relationship, openness to one another must be done. In the film, Angela and Reza each have personal problems, which eventually become the cause of conflict due to their openness from the start about their problems.

In family life, Reza and Angela have their respective duties as husband and wife. They share tasks together. Fostering relationships in married life is basically done not only on the partners but also on the partner's family. In reality, diversity and differences are not actually a barrier but can be a strength if faced in the right way.

Finally, the author hopes that the audience can understand and interpret the values in the film "*Bidadari Mencari Sayap*" in more depth. In addition, the author also hopes that the audience can absorb the positive messages implied in the film so that they can be implemented in real life.

## REFERENCE

- Abadi, R., Jers, L. O. T., & Hasniah. (2017). Adaptasi Dalam Berumah Tangga Setelah Pindah Agama. *Jurnal Kabanti*, 1(2), 10–18. <http://journal.fib.uho.ac.id/index.php/kabantiantropologi/article/view/255>
- Abdilah, & Sjafe'i, M. S. (2019). Konversi Agama (Studi Fenomenologi Pada Mualaf Tionghoa di Kota Banda Aceh). *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa FISIP Unsyiah*, 4(4). <http://www.jim.unsyiah.ac.id/FISIP/article/view/12933/5609>
- Ali, M. M. (2019). Analisis Gender Film Salah Bodi Melalui Semiotika Christian Metz. *Gelar : Jurnal Seni Budaya*, 16(1), 59–76. <https://doi.org/10.33153/glr.v16i1.2340>
- B, L., Monto, L. O., & Arsyad, M. (2018). Konflik Perkawinan dan Cara Penyelesaian Melalui Tokoh Adat (Studi di Desa Labone Kecamatan Lasalepa Kabupaten Muna). *Jurnal Neo Societal*, 3(2), 362–373. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.52423/jns.v3i2.4023>
- BPS. (2021). *Catalog : Statistik Indonesia 2021* (pp. xlii–758). Badan Pusat Statistik.
- Canary, D. J., & Yum, Y. (2015). Relationship Maintenance Strategies. In *The International Encyclopedia of Interpersonal Communication* (Vol. 1, Issue 1, pp. 1–9). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118540190.wbeic248>
- Diananto, W. (2020, September). Garin Nugroho Beri Hadiah Tak Biasa untuk Sineas Aria Kusumadewa, Apa Bentuknya? *Liputan6.Com*. <https://www.liputan6.com/showbiz/read/4369743/garin-nugroho-beri-hadiah-tak-biasa-untuk-sineas-aria-kusumadewa-apa-bentuknya>
- Ervianisa, F., & Christantyawati, N. (2019). Representasi banjir dalam film “Love at First Flood” di Thailand. *Jurnal Kajian Media*, 3(2), 132–156. <https://doi.org/10.25139/jkm.v3i2.2007>
- Farady Marta, R., & Robin, P. (2019). Kebahasaan Sinematik Bernuansa Pluralitas dalam Iklan BNI Taplus Anak. *Communication*, 10(1), 16. <https://doi.org/10.36080/comm.v10i1.810>
- Fernando, J., Marta, R. F., & Hidayati, R. K. (2020). Reaktualisasi mahasiswa diaspora Indonesia dalam menjaga identitas budaya bangsa di Benua Australia. *Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi*, 8(2), 194. <https://doi.org/10.24198/jkk.v8i2.25219>
- Ghony, D., & Almanshur, F. (2010). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. In Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. In E. D. Lestari (Ed.). Sukabumi: CV Jejak
- Indriani, S. S., & Rosfiantika, E. (2018). Pesan Rasisme dalam Episode the Vinyards pada Film American History X. *ProTVF*, 2(1), 87. <https://doi.org/10.24198/ptvf.v2i1.19879>
- Isnaini, H., & Arzak, M. (2019). Pasaji Ponan sebagai Wujud Komunikasi Budaya (Studi Interpretatif terhadap Masyarakat Desa Poto Kecamatan Moyo Hilir dalam Memaknai Tradisi Pasaji Ponan). *Kaganga Journal of Communcaition Science*, 1(1), 1–16. <http://www.jurnal.uts.ac.id/index.php/KAGANGA/article/view/408>
- Lilis, A., Dewi, K., Zamroni, M., Astuti, S. Y., Budaya, F. I., & Jember, U. (2017). Analisis Semiotika Film Christian Metz : Studi Kasus Visualisasi Pesan. *Publika Budaya*, 5(1), 21–27. <https://jurnal.unej.ac.id/index.php/PB/article/view/5986>
- Mujahidah, N. H., & Jaunedi, F. (2021). Penerimaan Penonton Mengenai Peran Gender Pada Karakter Perempuan Dalam Film Bumi Manusia. *Bricolage : Jurnal Magister Ilmu Komunikasi*, 7(1), 95–104.



- Nurhasanah, L. A., & Naryono, A. (2017). Interpersonal Communication Strategy for Maintaining Post-Violence Relationship. *Interaksi Online*, 5(3), 1–11. <https://ejournal3.undip.ac.id/index.php/interaksi-online/article/view/16748>
- Oktavianus, P. J. (2018). Analisis Semiotika Ketidakadilan Gender Terhadap Perempuan Dalam Film Marlina Si Pembunuh Empat Babak. *JISIP : Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 7(2), 136–147. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33366/jisip.v7i3.1591>
- Prameswari, T. M. (2017). Pengambilan Keputusan Sebagai Penyelesaian Konflik Dalam Hubungan Berpacaran. *Interaksi Online*, 5(2), 1–5. <https://ejournal3.undip.ac.id/index.php/interaksi-online/article/view/16070>
- Sari, R. P. (2020). *Bidadari Mencari Sayap, Saat Perbedaan Keyakinan Menggoyang Rumah Tangga Rizky Hanggono dan Leony*. Kompas.Com. <https://www.kompas.com/hype/read/2020/09/30/161024366/bidadari-mencari-sayap-saat-perbedaan-keyakinan-menggoyang-rumah-tangga?page=all>
- Sidabutar, E. T. (2019). Makna Kerja Keras dalam Film "La La Land", *Jurnal Riset Komunikasi*, 2(2), 171–183. <https://doi.org/10.24329/jurkom.v2i2.68>
- Sitompul, E. A., & Simaremar, J. A. (2017). Analisis Fungsi, Nilai Budaya dan Kearifan Lokal dalam Film Sinematografi Karya Sineas Muda Medan: Kajian Antropolinguistik. *Suluh Pendidikan*, 4(2), 24–37. <http://jsp.uhn.ac.id/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/04-Jurnal-Eden-Sitompul.pdf>
- Suryanto. (2016). Analisis Perbandingan Interpretasi Penokohan antara Novel dan Film 99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa. *Jurnal Proporsi*, 1(2), 153–164. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.22303/proporsi.1.2.2016.153-164>
- Tianotak, J., & Asy'ari, N. A. S. (2019). Makna Tagline 'Menjadi yang Terbaik' Iklan Telkomsel Versi Pilot Papua Riko Kabak, *Bricolage : Jurnal Magister Ilmu Komunikasi*, 5(1), 49–72. <https://doi.org/10.30813/bricolage.v5i01.1742>
- Zuhri, A. M., & Wahyudi, W. E. (2019). Teologi Sosial Muslim Tionghoa : *Empirisma*, 29(2), 103–112. <https://www.jurnal.iainkediri.ac.id/index.php/empirisma/article/viewFile/2345/1087>

"Excellent Career Begins With Excellent Education"  
Jl. Scientia Boulevard, Gading Serpong,  
Tangerang, Banten - 15811 Indonesia

[www.umn.ac.id](http://www.umn.ac.id)



**UMN**  
UNIVERSITAS  
MULTIMEDIA  
NUSANTARA



9 772085 460000