



EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A HEALTH COMMUNICATION PLATFORM FOR FILICIDE PREVENTION IN INDONESIA

EKSPLORASI POTENSI MEDIA SOSIAL SEBAGAI PLATFORM KOMUNIKASI KESEHATAN UNTUK PENCEGAHAN FILICIDE DI INDONESIA

Mega Nur Asmawati,

Master of Communication Science, Faculty of Communication Science, Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya University,

Email: meganasmawati@gmail.com

*email Koresponden: meganasmawati@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study explores the potential of social media as a health communication platform for preventing filicide in Indonesia, focusing on disseminating information, reducing stigma, and engaging audiences. The study adopts an exploratory approach based on secondary data, including the analysis of scientific literature, reports from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and UNICEF, and global campaigns such as #EndViolence. Research shows that social media can reach a broad audience, particularly the younger generation, through strategically designed educational content like infographics and videos. Empathy-driven campaigns utilizing real-life stories can also effectively reduce the stigma surrounding mental health, a primary cause of filicide. However, the study identifies challenges such as limited access in remote areas, potential misuse of platforms, and the sustainability of campaigns, which often pose obstacles. In Indonesia's context, adapting global campaign models to local culture can enhance prevention outcomes. Collaboration among the government, non-profit organizations, and the community is key to ensuring long-term impact. By integrating technologies such as artificial intelligence and gamification, and implementing data-driven approaches, social media can become a powerful tool to drive behavioral change and raise public awareness about filicide prevention.

Keywords : Health Communication, Social Media, Filicide, Mental Health

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk membuktikan apakah penggunaan strategi Choral Reading dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa kelas delapan SMP Negeri 13 Palu. Penelitian ini membatasi penggunaan Studi ini mengeksplorasi potensi media sosial sebagai platform komunikasi kesehatan untuk pencegahan pembunuhan bayi di Indonesia, dengan



fokus pada penyebaran informasi, menghilangkan stigma, dan melibatkan khalayak. Studi ini mengadopsi pendekatan eksploratif berdasarkan data sekunder termasuk analisis literatur ilmiah, laporan KPAI dan UNICEF, dan kampanye global seperti #EndViolence. Penelitian telah menunjukkan bahwa media sosial dapat menjangkau khalayak luas, terutama generasi muda, melalui konten pendidikan yang strategis seperti infografis dan video. Kampanye berbasis empati dengan menggunakan kisah nyata juga dapat efektif dalam mengurangi stigma seputar kesehatan mental, penyebab utama pembunuhan bayi. Namun, studi tersebut mengidentifikasi tantangan seperti keterbatasan akses di daerah terpencil, potensi penyalahgunaan platform dan keberlanjutan kampanye, yang sering kali menjadi kendala. Dalam konteks Indonesia, mengadaptasi model kampanye global dengan budaya lokal dapat meningkatkan hasil pencegahan. Kolaborasi antara pemerintah, lembaga nirlaba, dan masyarakat adalah kunci untuk memastikan dampak jangka panjang. Dengan mengintegrasikan teknologi seperti kecerdasan buatan dan gamifikasi, serta menerapkan pendekatan berbasis data, media sosial dapat menjadi alat yang ampuh untuk mendorong perubahan perilaku dan meningkatkan kesadaran publik tentang pencegahan pembunuhan bayi.

Kata Kunci : Komunikasi Kesehatan, Media Sosial, *Filicide*, Kesehatan Mental

1. INTRODUCTION

Filicide, the act of a parent killing their child, is a complex issue involving psychological, social, and economic factors. The term filicide refers to the intentional or unintentional killing of a child by a biological or adoptive parent, legal guardian, or stepparent; it includes child murders by parents or equivalents, fatal child abuse by parents or equivalents, and unintentional child deaths caused by parents or equivalents (Brown et al., 2020). In Indonesia, reports from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) indicate an increase in cases of violence against children, including filicide (KPAI, 2022). Contributing factors include economic pressure, mental health issues, and family dysfunction.

As one of the countries with the largest number of internet users globally, Indonesia has over 139 million active social media users, equivalent to 49.9% of the total population (Kemp, 2024). Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp have become primary channels for the public to seek information and interact online. This condition creates strategic opportunities to leverage social media for delivering health messages, particularly related to preventing violence against children. However, research on the use of social media for filicide prevention remains limited, requiring further exploration.

Previous studies indicate that social media has the ability to reach a wider audience compared to traditional media, especially among younger generations (Glanz et al., 2015). Moreover, the interactive nature of social media allows for two-way dialogue between message senders and audiences, which can enhance engagement and the effectiveness of health campaigns. However, little research has specifically explored how social media can be utilized for filicide prevention in Indonesia.

Filicide is often triggered by undiagnosed or untreated mental health conditions, such as postpartum depression, bipolar disorder, or chronic stress due to economic pressure (Friedman et al., 2005). Unfortunately, the stigma surrounding mental health in Indonesia remains high, deterring many individuals from seeking professional help. In this context, social media can serve as a medium for disseminating supportive mental health information while



simultaneously reducing associated stigma.

This article aims to explore the potential of social media as a health communication platform focused on filicide prevention in Indonesia. It also seeks to open avenues for further research on this topic. By understanding the strengths and challenges of social media, this study hopes to provide valuable insights for policymakers, academics, and practitioners in the field of public health.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses an exploratory approach with secondary data. The data sources include academic literature such as journal articles, books, and reports related to health communication, social media, and filicide. Additionally, secondary data is taken from reports by KPAI and UNICEF, which discuss child abuse and mental health. Global case studies are also part of the data sources, including health campaigns that utilize social media as the main platform, such as #EndViolence. The analysis methods applied in this study are content analysis to understand the potential of health communication on social media and thematic analysis to identify key elements in digital campaigns.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Health communication is a strategic process for delivering messages aimed at influencing public health behavior (Glanz et al., 2015). Social Learning Theory (SLT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) emphasize the role of observational learning and cognitive processes in health behavior change. These theories have been incorporated into various health campaigns and interventions that focus on individual behavior change through cognitive and observational learning processes (Aghazadeh & Aldoory, 2023). One relevant model is the Health Belief Model (HBM), which explains that individuals will adopt health behaviors if they believe they are vulnerable to a risk, perceive the severity of the risk, and understand the benefits of preventive actions (Rosenstock, 1974).

The Health Belief Model (HBM) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) are used to predict health behaviors based on beliefs and intentions. These models have played an essential role in the development of interventions targeting individual attitudes and perceived control over health behaviors (Aghazadeh & Aldoory, 2023).

Social media health communication refers to the use of digital platforms to disseminate health information, raise awareness, and encourage behavior change. Its interactive nature, wide-ranging possibilities, and ability to reach a broad demographic quickly make social media a powerful tool. Social media health communication strategies leverage the unique characteristics of digital platforms to significantly increase public health awareness. (Muhtar et al., (2024) state that visually engaging content such as infographics and videos grabs attention, encourages engagement, and improves health. Storytelling techniques enhance relationships and emotional engagement, facilitating the spread of pro-health messages.

Social media promotes community interaction, enabling users to share experiences and provide mutual support. This is particularly important during health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Kumar & Bhardwaj, 2024). Platforms like Twitter facilitate conversations at multiple levels, enhancing user engagement and trust in health information (Lawrence et al., 2024).

According to Thapliyal et al., social media enables the rapid spread of critical health information, which is vital for timely public health responses (Thapliyal et al., 2024). A survey



of 4,444 studies showed that most users trust health information from social media, highlighting its role in shaping health behaviors (Alrashidi et al., 2024).

Social media has been proven effective in raising health awareness and changing public behavior. Health campaigns like UNICEF's #EndViolence demonstrate how social media can be used to rapidly disseminate health messages (UNICEF, 2020).

Filicide is often associated with mental health disorders such as postpartum depression, schizophrenia, or other psychosocial pressures (Friedman et al., 2005). Health communication through social media can assist in early detection of risks by providing education and support services.

A study by Monash University revealed that multiple factors, including mental illness, domestic violence, and family breakdowns, interact and lead to filicide if not properly addressed. Of the 4,444 mothers who treated their children in similar ways, only 86% had mental health issues or had experienced separation. This percentage was higher than that for fathers and stepfathers. Most stepfathers had a history of domestic violence or child abuse and were known to use illegal drugs (Brown et al., 2019).

The Monash University study also found that stepfathers behaved "differently" than mothers and fathers. Stepdads were less likely to warn children about potential dangers and were less likely to attempt suicide. Furthermore, in most cases, stepfathers killed children aged between one and four years. Research has found correlations between a child's age and gender, custody type, and methods of filicide. For example, more boys than girls were killed by their parents. However, fathers were more likely to kill boys under one year old, while mothers killed babies and children aged between one and four years in equal numbers (Brown, Tyson & Fernandez in Brown et al., 2019).

Social media can support health communication in filicide prevention through:

1. Information Dissemination

The spread of information is crucial for health communication because it enhances understanding and engagement within interest-based communities. Online social networks like Twitter can quickly disseminate health messages and allow healthcare providers to reach a wider audience. However, information can become trapped within homogeneous communities, limiting its effectiveness and reach (Vaghefi et al., 2024). Studies show that content such as infographics and educational videos can reach up to 78% of younger audiences on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, which is relevant for raising awareness (Hootsuite, 2023).

2. Audience Interaction

Social media provides opportunities for direct interaction through features like comments, surveys, and Q&A sessions. For example, a mental health campaign on Facebook using polling features successfully increased public participation by 45% more than without this feature (UNICEF, 2020). To effectively disseminate health information to BIPOC communities, direct community interaction and culturally appropriate communication strategies are essential. Techniques like narrative storytelling and workshops have been proven effective in building trust and participation (Kelly & Ostovar-kermani, 2024).

4. Stigma Elimination

Empathy-based campaigns that involve personal experience stories have proven effective in reducing stigma against mental health. A case study from the #EndTheStigma campaign in the UK showed that posts sharing real-life experiences had engagement rates up to three times higher than data-driven campaigns. According to Li et al., (2018), stigma surrounding suicide spread through social media can hinder help-seeking behavior and increase the risk of death.



Therefore, targeted online campaigns are needed to increase mental health literacy and encourage individuals to seek help.

Despite its potential benefits, concerns exist regarding the security and impact of messages delivered through social media, as evidenced by the varied results from broader public campaigns. It is crucial to develop flexible guidelines for reporting and discussing suicide issues online, especially considering the rapid developments in the digital landscape (Abbott et al., 2018).

Discussing suicide and filicide is inherently sensitive, which can lead to discomfort or miscommunication among users (Robinson et al., 2023). The presence of "death groups" and dangerous challenges on platforms like TikTok can trigger suicidal behavior and complicate efforts to communicate safely (Puchnina & Puchnin, 2023). Engaging more young people with different understandings and experiences of mental health can weaken the effectiveness of campaigns (Thorn et al., 2020).

Not all Indonesians have equal access to social media, particularly in rural and remote areas. For future public health practices, integrating the latest technologies like artificial intelligence and gamification could change how social media campaigns are designed and delivered (Sitar, 2024). Additionally, the sustainability of campaigns is often an issue, as many social media campaigns are short-term without measurable long-term impacts.

The #EndViolence campaign by UNICEF successfully raised awareness about child abuse through the use of hashtags, emotional videos, and partnerships with influencers. However, compared to the situation in Indonesia, there is still a gap in the implementation of similar campaigns. In Indonesia, campaigns related to child abuse tend to be sporadic and lack deep visual or emotional approaches. For instance, the use of local influencers and specific hashtags has not been fully optimized to reach the wider community. This highlights an opportunity for stakeholders to develop more structured communication strategies based on local data. A similar approach can be applied in the context of filicide prevention in Indonesia.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that a comprehensive approach is needed to address filicide, which, according to Dawson (Brown et al., 2020), is a public health approach. Such an approach would use knowledge gained from research to design, develop, disseminate, and implement prevention programs, including education for professionals, organizations, and communities, as well as programs tailored to specific target groups.

Social media holds great potential to be used as a health communication platform in the context of filicide prevention. Based on the Health Belief Model (HBM) (Rosenstock, 1974), information dissemination through social media can increase public perception of vulnerability and the seriousness of the filicide risk, as well as the benefits of preventive actions. Thus, strategically designed content can alter societal behavior toward violence prevention.

User engagement in interactive dialogue on social media also aligns with two-way communication theory, which emphasizes the importance of information exchange to build trust and improve message effectiveness (Glanz et al., 2015). A study by UNICEF (2020) on the #EndViolence campaign showed that collaborating with influencers and using emotional visuals can expand the reach of messages and increase campaign impact. This is especially true in Indonesia, where social media usage is high, but accessibility remains a challenge in some areas.



Furthermore, stigma related to mental health, one of the factors leading to filicide (Friedman et al., 2005), can be reduced through empathy-based campaigns. However, it is important to note that message design must be sensitive to local culture to avoid resistance from the audience. A major challenge in implementation is campaign sustainability. Many social media initiatives fail to achieve long-term impact due to a lack of policy support and resource limitations. Therefore, collaboration between the government, non-profit organizations, and local communities is necessary to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of campaigns.

Using social media for filicide prevention campaigns has become an important area of research, especially in engaging the younger generation in efforts to prevent suicide cases. These campaigns utilize the broad reach and influence of social media to provide education and empower youth, while also encouraging safe communication about suicide issues. These initiatives have proven effective in boosting young people's confidence in discussing suicide online, reflecting a shift in approach to this issue in the digital world (Sala et al., 2021).

Social media campaigns about infant or child murder can be effective in raising awareness of the issue while avoiding sensationalism by adopting a balanced and ethical approach to content dissemination. The goal is to highlight the complexity of the issue, tell the stories of victims, and send responsible messages. Empowering communities through education and training can significantly improve the dissemination of health information. Involving community members in health initiatives enhances ownership and improves public health outcomes (Rodiah et al., 2019).

Campaigns should present the perspectives of both victims and perpetrators, avoiding excessive sensationalism regarding one group. This helps humanize the victims and provide context for the perpetrators, reducing stigma and enhancing understanding (Grau, 2021). We can fight sensationalism by using data and research to inform the public about the realities of infanticide. For example, campaigns could raise awareness of statistics about domestic violence and mental health issues that often underlie such tragedies (Buiten & Coe, 2021).

In the Indonesian context, adapting global campaign models like #EndViolence should consider the characteristics of the local audience. Global campaigns such as #EndViolence initiated by UNICEF have shown the effectiveness of social media in raising awareness about child abuse. This campaign uses a combination of strategies, including engaging visuals, collaboration with influencers, and message dissemination across various social media platforms (UNICEF, 2020). By learning from the success of similar campaigns, Indonesia can adapt this approach to create effective filicide prevention strategies. This study provides a foundation for developing digital communication strategies that can be effectively implemented in filicide prevention.

5. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the great potential of social media as a health communication platform for preventing infant murder through information dissemination, audience engagement, and stigma elimination. Strategically designed content such as infographics and educational videos can increase awareness, especially among younger audiences, while interactive features such as comments and polls facilitate dialogue and boost public



involvement. Empathy-based campaigns using real stories have also proven effective in reducing stigma surrounding mental health, a cause of child murder.

However, there are limitations, such as information dissemination within homogeneous communities, the potential for platform misuse, limited access in remote areas, and the lack of campaign sustainability. Other challenges include: in the Indonesian context, adapting global campaigns like #EndViolence to the local culture can be an effective strategy. Ensuring sustainability and long-term impact requires collaboration between the government, non-profit organizations, and communities. By integrating cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence and gamification, and avoiding sensationalism with a data-driven approach, social media can be a tool to help society prevent infant murder and create positive behavioral change.

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