THE DIGITAL CAMPAIGN STRATEGY OF GEMARIKAN BY INDONESIA'S MINISTRY OF MARINE AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

STRATEGI KAMPANYE DIGITAL GEMARIKAN OLEH KEMENTERIAN KELAUTAN DAN PERIKANAN REPUBLIK INDONESIA

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Abstract

Indonesia is the world's second-largest fish producer, yet national fish consumption remains relatively low. To address this gap, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries launched the *Gemarikan* (Eat More Fish) campaign, which has recently shifted to digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to reach wider and younger audiences. This study explores the digital communication strategies used in the Gemarikan campaign, employing a constructivist paradigm and descriptive qualitative approach. Data were gathered through interviews, observation of digital channels, and document analysis at the Directorate General of Strengthening the Competitiveness of Marine and Fishery Products. Findings show that the campaign relies on persuasive, visual, collaborative, and educational messaging. While digital media enables interactive and contextual communication, effectiveness is shaped by technical and cultural factors. The study highlights the need for data-driven, adaptive digital communication strategies to promote healthy and sustainable food consumption behavior.

Keywords : digital campaign, fish consumption, persuasive communication, *Gemarikan*, constructivism, social media, public communication strategy.

Abstrak

Indonesia merupakan produsen ikan terbesar kedua di dunia, namun tingkat konsumsi ikan nasional masih tergolong rendah. Untuk mengatasi kesenjangan ini, Kementerian Kelautan dan

Perikanan meluncurkan kampanye Gemarikan (Gerakan Memasyarakatkan Makan Ikan), yang belakangan bertransformasi ke platform digital seperti Instagram, TikTok, dan YouTube guna menjangkau audiens yang lebih luas dan lebih muda. Studi ini mengeksplorasi strategi komunikasi digital yang digunakan dalam kampanye Gemarikan, dengan menggunakan paradigma konstruktivisme dan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi kanal digital, dan analisis dokumen di lingkungan Direktorat Jenderal Penguatan Daya Saing Produk Kelautan dan Perikanan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kampanye ini mengandalkan pesan yang bersifat persuasif, visual, kolaboratif, dan edukatif. Meskipun media digital memungkinkan terjadinya komunikasi yang interaktif dan kontekstual, efektivitas kampanye dipengaruhi oleh faktor teknis dan kultural. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya strategi komunikasi digital yang adaptif dan berbasis data untuk mendorong perilaku konsumsi pangan yang sehat dan berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci : Kampanye digital, konsumsi ikan, komunikasi persuasif, Gemarikan, konstruktivisme, media sosial, strategi komunikasi publik.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country in the world, with a maritime area spanning approximately 3.25 million square kilometers, accounting for around 70% of its total territory (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, 2022). With such vast marine resources, Indonesia holds significant potential to become a global leader in the fisheries sector, both in terms of production and consumption. According to the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), Indonesia is one of the world's top fish producers and ranks first in ASEAN. In terms of marine fisheries, Indonesia is the second-largest producer globally, after China. China produces approximately 13 million tons of marine fish annually, while Indonesia produces 5.8 million tons. A similar trend is seen in aquaculture, where Indonesia, with a production of 4.7 million tons per year, also ranks second after China (DetikFinance, 2014).

Ironically, despite the country's abundant marine resources, Indonesia's fish consumption remains relatively low. According to data from the MMAF, the national fish consumption rate in 2022 was only 57.27 kg per capita per year, falling short of the national target of 62 kg per capita (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, 2023). Compared to countries such as Japan, where fish consumption exceeds 80 kg per capita annually (FAO, 2021), Indonesia lags significantly behind. Regionally, only a few provinces—such as Maluku, with 79.49 kg per capita per year—exceed the national average, while many others remain below this threshold (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, 2023). One of the main reasons for the low fish consumption in Indonesia is the lack of public awareness regarding the benefits of eating fish, particularly among the younger generation. Surveys indicate that the primary reason young people are reluctant to consume fish is their dislike of its fishy smell (Ikhsanudin, R., 2023). This is concerning, as fish is a high-quality source of animal protein and rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for heart and brain health, as well as child development (Rahma et al., 2024).

To address this issue, the Indonesian government, through the MMAF, launched the "Gemarikan" (Gerakan Memasyarakatkan Makan Ikan or "Eat More Fish Movement")

program in 2004. Initiated by Indonesia's fifth President, Megawati Soekarnoputri, the campaign aims to increase national fish consumption by educating the public on the health and food security benefits of eating fish (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, 2022). Over time, Gemarikan has been implemented using both conventional and digital approaches. Traditional methods include face-to-face counseling, banner installations, and educational events such as seminars and fish bazaars.

With the advancement of information technology, the campaign has increasingly utilized digital media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook. These platforms were chosen for their wide reach, interactive capabilities, and multimedia content formats, including text, images, and videos (Ngongo, L., Hidayat, T., & Wiyanto, 2019). Digital media offer distinct advantages in terms of reach, accessibility, and content flexibility.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the Gemarikan digital campaign continues to face several challenges, including limited promotional budgets, inconsistent message delivery, and competition from more entertaining or viral content on social media (Bella Juliet Arianita et al., 2021). Therefore, a well-planned communication strategy that aligns with the characteristics of the target audience is crucial for the campaign's success.

This study is essential in assessing the digital campaign strategies employed by the MMAF in the Gemarikan program and evaluating their effectiveness in raising public awareness of the importance of fish consumption. Through analysis of platform selection, message design, and audience engagement levels, this research aims to offer strategic recommendations for enhancing digital campaign efforts in the era of modern communication. Moreover, the study contributes to the academic discourse on the role of digital communication in driving behavioral change, particularly in promoting healthy and sustainable food consumption.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is grounded in the constructivist paradigm, which views reality as a product of social construction through interaction and subjective interpretation. This paradigm is particularly relevant for examining how the digital campaign strategies of *Gemarikan*, initiated by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), are designed, perceived, and interpreted by both implementers and the audience. In the context of digital campaigns, the constructivist approach enables a deeper understanding of the processes of meaning negotiation between message senders and receivers, especially through new media characterized by interactive dynamics (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A qualitative descriptive approach is employed to explore in depth the phenomenon of digital campaign strategies in their natural context, relying on empirical data gathered through interviews, observation, and document analysis. This approach allows the researcher to explore communication phenomena contextually and to grasp the dynamics from the perspectives of the actors involved (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

This research is exploratory in nature, focusing on the design, implementation, and public perception of the Gemarikan digital campaign. The study is conducted at the Directorate General of Strengthening the Competitiveness of Marine and Fishery Products (DJPSDPKP), under the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, located in Central Jakarta. Additionally, observations were made on the official digital channels of the

Gemarikan campaign—such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok—to examine communication patterns and audience engagement on social media (Couldry & Hepp, 2017).

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews with MMAF officials, the creative team behind the campaign, and stakeholders from the fisheries industry involved in the program. Observations were conducted on digital campaign content to analyze the form of messages, visual strategies, and audience interactions. The researcher also conducted a literature review of official documents, academic sources, and program reports to enrich data interpretation. This combination aligns with the triangulation method in qualitative research to ensure data validity (Silverman, 2020).

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their level of involvement and knowledge of the Gemarikan program. Informants were categorized into two groups: key informants from DJPSDPKP and supporting informants from the campaign's digital content creative team. This approach allows for the collection of complementary perspectives (LA et al., 2015).

Data analysis was carried out using thematic analysis**,** which involved three stages: data reduction, narrative data presentation, and drawing conclusions based on emerging patterns and meanings derived from observations and interviews. Thematic analysis was used to identify and interpret core themes related to digital communication strategies and audience perceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Gemarikan Program

Gemarikan stands for *Gerakan Memasyarakatkan Makan Ikan* (Movement to Promote Fish Consumption), a program initiated by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) of the Republic of Indonesia. It is aligned with the national vision of *Indonesia Emas 2045*, which aspires to enhance national prosperity, human quality, and economic strength—ultimately positioning Indonesia as one of the top five global economic powers by the centennial of its independence in 2045. At that point, Indonesia is projected to have 70% of its population within the productive age range (15–64 years), while the remaining 30% will be non-productive (under 14 and over 65 years old).

The MMAF contributes to this vision through the Gemarikan campaign, which aims to increase fish consumption across Indonesia, particularly among children, adolescents, and the younger generation. The campaign responds to the relatively low rate of fish consumption in Indonesia, especially when compared to neighboring Asian countries. Moreover, it promotes a healthy lifestyle by encouraging fish consumption as a means of preventing stunting and other health issues. The Gemarikan campaign also seeks to educate the public on the importance of fish as a nutritional resource and to shift public behavior toward choosing fish as the primary source of protein over other options like beef, chicken, or eggs.

The target audience includes all segments of society, with a special focus on the younger generation, who are considered influential in setting trends and shaping future behavior. Establishing healthy consumption habits at an early age is expected to have long-term positive effects on dietary patterns.

Digital Campaign Strategy of the Gemarikan Program

The MMAF's *Gemarikan* initiative utilizes a digital campaign strategy to raise public awareness about the benefits of consuming fish. This digital approach was developed as a solution to the limitations of in-person outreach, and is implemented intensively via social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube.

The strategy involves the creation of creative and educational content—such as fish recipes, nutritional benefits of fish, interactive quizzes, webinars, and influencer collaborations. The content is curated through a structured content plan to align with the needs of specific target groups, including pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, children, and adolescents, in accordance with Presidential Regulation No. 72 of 2021.

Research indicates that the campaign strategy consists of three main phases:

1. Planning – includes analyzing low fish consumption, setting campaign objectives (awareness, consumption increase, and behavioral change), and segmenting the audience.
2. Development – involves crafting key messages (e.g., "Let's Eat Fish: Healthy, Strong, and Smart"), choosing social media strategies, and collaborating with influencers.
3. Management – entails resource allocation, inter-institutional collaboration, and data-driven evaluations based on digital metrics (engagement, interaction, and follower growth) to refine strategy.

Overall, the digitalization of the Gemarikan campaign has proven effective in expanding message outreach, increasing public engagement, and supporting national fish consumption goals.

Campaign Objectives

The objective of the Gemarikan campaign is to boost fish consumption in Indonesia through a communication strategy based on Ostergaard's 3A model—Awareness, Attitude, and Action. This framework is employed to influence public consciousness, attitudes, and behaviors toward fish consumption:

1. Awareness
   The campaign raises awareness of fish's nutritional benefits (protein, omega-3, vitamins, and minerals) through digital media (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube) and interactive educational tools (quizzes, webinars). Public figures and influencers help reinforce campaign messages.
2. Attitude
   Positive attitudes toward fish consumption are nurtured through content tailored to specific segments. For instance, fish-based recipes and weaning food (MPASI) are aimed at housewives, while messages targeting adolescent girls emphasize the benefits of fish for beauty and reproductive health.
3. Action
   To drive action, the campaign educates the public on selecting fresh fish and preparing it practically. It also promotes locally processed fish products to stimulate interest and dietary diversity.

Challenges in Campaign Implementation

The implementation of the *Gemarikan* digital campaign faces several obstacles, including technical issues, social factors, and resource constraints. Budget limitations remain a major

challenge, affecting the production of engaging content and collaborations with influencers. The campaign must also compete with a vast amount of more popular digital content, making it harder to reach the intended audience effectively.

Public awareness of fish's health benefits remains low due to uneven education and lingering negative perceptions. Moreover, local government participation is limited, especially in digitally underserved regions. Measuring campaign effectiveness is another challenge, as changing consumption behavior requires sustained education and appropriate indicators to assess message impact.

Application of Carl Hovland's Persuasive Communication Theory

The Gemarikan digital campaign incorporates Carl Hovland's five-stage persuasive communication theory—attention, comprehension, learning, acceptance, and retention—to strategically utilize social media in boosting fish consumption among Indonesians.

1. Attention

   To attract audience attention, Gemarikan employs:
   - Visually appealing content such as fish recipes, infographics, and short videos.
   - Trend-based strategies that align with social media aesthetics (music, color, design, and posting time).
   - Interactive features like quizzes to boost engagement.

2. Comprehension

   To ensure message clarity:
   - Simple and direct language is used.
   - Messages are tailored to specific audiences (e.g., mothers, teenagers, MSMEs).
   - Content is presented in a light and relatable manner.

3. Learning

   To encourage audience learning:
   - Educational content such as quizzes, infographics, and videos are provided.
   - Quizzes are considered effective for prompting active information seeking and enhancing understanding.
   - Content is adapted to local contexts to deepen its educational impact.

4. Acceptance

   To foster message acceptance and attitude change, Gemarikan uses public figures and influencers. By featuring the President promoting fish consumption or appealing influencers consuming fish, the campaign generates persuasive effects that encourage public receptiveness.

5. Retention

   To ensure long-term message recall, the campaign consistently applies branding elements such as the tagline "#Ayo Makan Ikan: Sehat, Kuat, dan Cerdas" and the Gemarikan logo on all content. Repetitive informative content across social media reinforces audience memory and message longevity.

Digital Campaign "Gemarikan" by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF)

The digital campaign *Gerakan Memasyarakatkan Makan Ikan* (Gemarikan), initiated by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), illustrates how government communication strategies have adaptively transformed in the digital era. By leveraging a social media–based approach, the MMAF not only disseminates information in a one-way manner but also fosters participatory interaction with the public. The selection of platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook reflects a deep understanding of the diverse characteristics of the target audience and the need for tailored communication styles.

The content strategy employed by the MMAF is highly oriented toward persuasive and accessible visual messaging. The use of infographics, short videos, and interactive graphic designs demonstrates the ministry's success in utilizing digital communication formats that align with contemporary patterns of information consumption. In addition, the consistent use of hashtags such as *#AyoMakanIkan* and the integration of campaign taglines strengthens brand identity and facilitates message retention in the minds of the public.

The MMAF also demonstrates an inclusive communication approach through collaborations with influencers. This reflects the *two-step flow of communication* theory, in which messages are more effectively received when conveyed by figures who have social and psychological proximity to their audiences. This strategy simultaneously addresses the challenge of public trust in government information, which can be bridged by popular and relatable personalities.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Digital Campaign "Gemarikan"

Digital Campaign Characteristic	Description
Use of Social Media	The campaign utilizes various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook to reach a broader audience.
Visual-Based Approach	Emphasis on using engaging visual content such as videos, images, infographics, and cooking tutorials to enhance the appeal of the message
Collaboration with Influencers	Partnering with influencers and celebrities to boost the campaign's credibility and attractiveness, particularly among younger audiences.
Educational and Entertaining Content	Delivering informative messages about the benefits of fish consumption in an entertaining manner, such as through recipes and health facts.
Audience Interactivity	Encouraging audience engagement through comments, hashtags, and participation in challenges or relevant competitions.
Use of Campaign Hashtags	Promoting the use of dedicated hashtags (e.g., #Gemarikan) to strengthen the campaign identity and help the audience find related content.
Audience Segmentation	Customizing campaign messages according to audience characteristics on each platform, targeting both younger

	and older demographics.
Content Variety	Offering a diverse range of content types, including fish recipes, health facts, video tutorials, and testimonials to appeal to different audience segments.
Persuasive Messaging	Offering a diverse range of content types, including fish recipes, health facts, video tutorials, and testimonials to appeal to different audience segments.
Message Consistency	Maintaining consistent messaging across platforms to ensure clarity and ease of understanding for all audience members.

Furthermore, this campaign strategy is closely aligned with Carl Hovland's Persuasive Communication Theory, which emphasizes five stages of attitude change: attention, comprehension, learning, acceptance, and retention. The *Gemarikan* campaign has strategically implemented these stages through attention-grabbing content design, the use of simple and accessible language, engaging elements such as quizzes and challenges, and consistent message repetition across various media formats. This approach demonstrates how the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) not only disseminates information but also shapes fish consumption behavior as part of a healthy lifestyle.

However, this analysis also highlights several key challenges in the campaign's implementation, such as limited digital access in remote areas, intense competition with other social media content, and budget constraints. These issues underscore that while digital communication strategies offer vast opportunities, their execution still requires inclusive policymaking and adequate resource support to ensure equitable and sustainable impact.

Overall, the *Gemarikan* digital campaign serves as a concrete example of how public institutions can effectively adopt digital communication approaches by combining education, entertainment, and interactivity. This model can serve as a reference for developing other educational campaigns, especially in contexts that demand behavioral change through creative, persuasive, and participatory communication strategies.

Table 2. Digital Campaign and Key Aspects Utilized

Aspect	Findings
Message Source	Utilization of influencers and celebrities to enhance credibility and attract audience attention.
Campaign Message	Educational messages encouraging the public to consume fish regularly, packaged in engaging formats such as video tutorials, recipes, and infographics.
Social Media Platforms	Use of Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook to reach both younger and older audiences with tailored communication styles.
Visual Elements	Use of appealing visual elements (videos, images, infographics) to increase the attractiveness and clarity of the message.

Campaign Content	Varied content including health facts, fish cooking tutorials, and recipes relevant to the digital lifestyle of the audience.
Audience Interaction	The campaign engages audiences interactively through comments, challenges, and the use of campaign hashtags.
Audience Reception	High audience receptiveness, with most participants indicating an intention to consume fish more frequently.
Challenges Faced	Challenges related to socio-economic and cultural factors, as well as access to high-quality fish.

Analytical Reflection

The success of the *Gemarikan* campaign highlights several critical aspects in the application of persuasive digital communication strategies by public institutions. Firstly, the campaign reflects the shift from traditional top-down communication to a more dialogic and participatory model. This aligns with current digital communication trends where audience engagement and personalization are key to message effectiveness.

Secondly, the integration of Carl Hovland's persuasive theory in the design of the campaign demonstrates how theoretical frameworks can be pragmatically applied in real-world communication efforts. Each element—credible message sources (influencers), tailored and engaging content, and audience segmentation—worked in synergy to foster attitude change and message retention.

Furthermore, the campaign illustrates the importance of media literacy and message framing in public health communication. By framing fish consumption not only as a health choice but also as a lifestyle, the campaign taps into affective and aspirational dimensions of digital audiences, especially the youth.

However, this analysis also underlines the ongoing digital divide and the limitations of relying solely on digital platforms for public campaigns. To ensure inclusivity and sustainability, a hybrid communication model—combining online and offline strategies—may be necessary to reach underserved populations and reinforce behavior change beyond digital spaces.

In conclusion, the *Gemarikan* campaign is not only a case study in effective digital outreach but also a valuable learning model in the integration of persuasive theory, visual culture, and participatory communication in shaping public behavior. Future campaigns can benefit from this approach by prioritizing relevance, resonance, and resource accessibility across diverse audience groups.

4. CONCLUSION

The *Gemarikan* (Movement to Encourage Fish Consumption) digital campaign by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) serves as a successful example of how public communication strategies can adapt effectively in the digital era. By leveraging social media, engaging visual content, and collaborations with influencers, the campaign successfully delivered persuasive and educational messages that resonated with a broad audience, particularly younger generations.

Drawing upon Carl Hovland's Persuasive Communication Theory, the campaign demonstrated its ability to build audience attention, comprehension, and ultimately shift attitudes toward regular fish consumption. The use of credible message sources, varied content formats, and tailored messaging based on audience characteristics strengthened the campaign's impact.

Nevertheless, challenges remain, such as limited digital access in remote areas and cultural differences in dietary habits. Addressing these issues requires inclusive policies, broader content distribution, and improved digital infrastructure to reach all segments of society effectively.

In summary, *Gemarikan* represents an effective model for digital public campaigns by combining education, entertainment, and interactivity. It illustrates how strategic, theory-based public communication can play a powerful role in influencing positive behavioral change and promoting a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle.

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