

# **SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNITY IN PANDEMIC COVID-19**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The rapid flow of information about Covid-19 made people focus their attention on social media. This situation has made social media no longer a place to share about daily activities, but information about Covid-19. Finally, social media users become producers, distributors, and consumers of information about Covid-19 that is on social media. This paper discusses the use of social media that used as a means of information by the public, and various aspects relating to the information habits of the community during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

**Keywords: Social media, information, covid-19 pandemic**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

Covid19 is an infectious disease caused by a coronavirus which is recently discovered and caused not only needed medical attention but in the process has developed into a social problem. The main threat to the majority of people is they could be infected with the virus very quickly. The virus will cause symptoms from mild to moderate respiratory illness. In some cases, it won't show symptoms, and some recovery just needed some rest without the need for special care. However, senior citizen and those who have a history of underlying illnesses such as cardiovascular, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer are likely to develop more quick and serious illness and fatality ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)). The virus needed to be contained by slowing the spread, decrease social interaction and all of that is very essential communication.

The official decided that the best way to prevent this spread is to inform it to various media, information such as washing hands with soap, or by using a hand sanitizer and not touching the face when the hands have not been cleaned. The spread of Covid-19, a deadly pandemic spreads through droplets from saliva, sneezing by transmitted fluids from the nose. This added more information, procedures of rules, and ethics of sneezing and coughing also in various media which aims to educate the public.

The covid19 pandemic was allegedly first occurred at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, China. This incident was recorded at [www.worldmeters.info](http://www.worldmeters.info) until July 19, 2020 Coronavirus Cases in Wuhan recorded a total of 83,660 cases, 4,634 died and 78,775 recovered. It is not unexpected, that Indonesia until July 19, 2020, will also suffer the same ordeal. At least recorded 86,521 cases, 4,143 died and 45,401 recovered. The data mentioned, cases from worldwide are 14,454,023 where the USA, Brazil, and India are the 3 largest countries that have the highest cases up to July 19, 2020. ([www.worldmeters.info](http://www.worldmeters.info))

The Covid19 pandemic became the center of attention in the world community, there is not a single media caught off guard with wall to wall coverage and also providing information about the pandemic spread. All kinds of information emerged, and it has the potential to change people's behavior and patterns in information use. Changing patterns of mass media and informatization gets more stimulation, all the attention by mainstream media which sourced from user-generated content is more rapid than before. When mass media has reached "side by side" terms with social media as means of information, it's now tangled up and lost its main role as a public source of information. As much information about Covid-19 is far faster popping out of social media, the government has also lost control to respond to the public. This situation certainly changes the behavior of the community, this abundance of information would affect the condition and psychological of the community who see and read it.

## **B. INFORMATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Defining information into a concept is quite challenging because the information has various aspects such as characteristics and benefits that may be different from one another. Explaining information could be only in the form of an impression of one's mind or it might also be in the form of neatly arranged and processed data (Yusup 2010, 1). Viewed from its origin, information is a record of the observed phenomenon, or it can also be in the form of decisions made (Estabrook, 1977: 245).

There is so much information that is spread that can come into our lives, it can even be ascertained that humans will not be able to carry on their lives without information. Information is a necessity for our lives. From waking up, spending the day, and even until back to our sleep, information just kept pouring in. Information is no longer something that we look for. Even without asking it, the information will come to us and in this case, the one that closest to us is social media.

This informatization is a phenomenon that can be explained in simple terms. For example, an event occurs in a place and a person sees and records it in his mind, that is what is called information. When the person begins to package it and deliver it to someone by word of mouth, then the information that is based on verbal is conveyed to others. Many deliver information in the form of writing, many also have described in the form of images and or videos, the information is said to be recorded information, and so many people share information on social media.

In essence, the media is based on information. But this also depends on the viewpoint of the recipient. Whether the information is valuable or not for the readers it's in their interest or viewpoint what matters. The era of globalization has now transformed society into infinite information use information technology. The public can become producers, distributors, consumers, and even become information manipulators. Not a few popping up false information, or information that has not been confirmed and has been spread, read, or may be used by the community. Finally, the community must test its ability to judge which information is useful and not for its life.

The ability to understand, access, analyze, evaluate and communicate information in the form of media content is something that needs to be done by

people so they won't be carried put in the misinformation, which most messages are spread in mass and digital media (Purwaningtyas, 2018). The media does not merely provide information and entertainment but also invites the public to represent the message recorded by the reader.

The term social media is composed of two words, namely "media" and "social". "Media" is meant as a communication tool (Mulawarman, 2017) (Laughey, 2007; McQuail, 2003). While the word "social" is defined as a social reality that every individual takes action that contributes to society. This statement confirms that in reality, media and all software are "social" or in the sense that both are products of social processes (Durkheim in Fuchs, 2014).

Social media, which is one of the information media within the reach of the community, according to Van Dijk in Sari (2018) states that social media is a media platform that focuses on the existence of users who facilitate them in their activities and collaborations. Therefore social media can be seen as an online medium (facilitator) that strengthens the relationship between users as well as a social bond.

In this case, it can be seen that social media is what connects users who interact with each other. Where every user in social media can give each other responses and also their views. In the Covid-19 pandemic, social media was one of the easiest ways to reach the public. Including providing or becoming one of the educational facilities, in a study by Sampurno (2020) there were several findings, namely:

1. Social media culture in Indonesia can act as a teacher who can educate the public and stimulate the latest research related to COVID-19;
2. As a public health education service;
3. Directing people to their website and landing page for information on the latest and most trusted COVID-19;
4. Marketing innovative services such as health care social funding services;
5. Posting related case information, photos, and results (with permission) relating to COVID-19 to educate the public;
6. Share reviews and testimonies of patients who recover as motivation and initial prevention efforts; and
7. Providing support among Indonesian citizens in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic

It is clear in one study (Sampurno, 2020) that social media can reach and influence millions of Indonesians simultaneously. The most obvious power of media lies in the number of individuals they can reach. Social media can influence individual behavior and community values that also support the environment and the individual so that it is necessary to maintain habits of behavior change for health awareness. Besides, as the pattern of health service delivery continues to change, the media can provide valuable information to the public about other options and perspectives.

Social media has become one of the media for education, starting from the amount of information so that it is easy to find information that fits the needs of

readers, one of which is information about Covid-19. The development of information into a particular application has also been carried out by the central and even local governments, and there are also social media - social media owned by individuals sharing information related to Covid-19. As Sampurno (2020) stated that in addition to its relationship as entertainment media, social media can be used as an alternative source of answers for daily questions, including information and questions about Covid-19.

The power of social media is now no doubt, where the speed is in tandem with online media, but in this social media, many things need to be considered as well. The reader's awareness and ability to review the information obtained must be the main reference. Because the information in social media is essentially not in the presence of an editor, even the regulator should be the mass media that is already in the realm of providing information (news). So often in the end the information obtained from social media is even misleading and not a few misinterpretations occur.

### **C. SHARING OF COVID-19 INFORMATION BY THE COMMUNITY**

Information sharing is carried out by the community during this pandemic in many ways, some use text in the form of explanations that are appropriate to their counterparts, in the form of interesting pictures, and some in the form of instructional videos that are packaged. In principle, the packaging of this information is very good, so that it can attract the interest of the reader or viewer so that the information can be useful for others.

Information that is packaged in such a way is finally conveyed via the internet, of course through social media. The flow of information is so swift, the information is abundant, finally, the reader or the viewer chooses to choose which information he will or wants to see, and not even a small amount of information will eventually lead to confusion by the reader. As Yusup (2010, 3) explains that indeed information can reduce uncertainty, but also it adds confusion (Estabrook, 1977: 246). Information is not useful in principle, but some circles ultimately make the information as to their needs.

The existence of the internet which is used to access social media significantly influences the way people live because of the technological elements in it. For example, someone doing something related to his work is inspired by posts on social media, and ultimately can change the way humans look and how individuals live, including learning, defining things, and so on.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, it also changed people's behavior in sharing the information they had. It Will be a danger when the information shared is not actual information, or may not be following the latest updates from the development of the virus. Inevitably, mistakes will occur or even worse will have a bad effect on someone. In a study conducted by Sampurno (2020) argues that the internet undermines the culture of believing that the open nature of the internet through social media allows any information to be reached by anyone and anywhere. Either

children or adults who instantly copy what they see or read and copy or practice themselves are not relevant to the environment they find. On the other hand, the internet brings culture closer to more individuals, making it easier and faster to access; which has the potential to foster the emergence of new forms of expression for art and the dissemination of knowledge, including its relation to the dissemination of information related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is in line with the opinion of Mulawarman (2017) The reality of Indonesian society, even the world today seems interesting to be seen from the perspective of social cognition. According to Baron & Byrne (2003), social cognition is defined as the workings of the human mind to understand the surrounding environment so that humans can function in it adaptively. The workings of the mind include the activity of interpreting, analyzing, remembering, and using information about the social world.

Indeed, in the culture of sharing that occurs by Indonesian people is very diverse, even not a few who think when sharing information then they are considered 'there'. This situation is a mistake in understanding the information, precisely the information that is not confirmed and the source is unclear, it will endanger others. However, today many people are aware of accurate and reliable information, this is also directed by the government to access information and reliable sources related to Covid-19, namely access to trusted pages or applications (government applications area and ministry of health).

Furthermore, Sampurno (2020) reiterates in his research that it is not saying the internet through social media is always positive and there are no problems, instead, it invites readers not to let the internet through social media blind people to the negative impact of the internet on culture. The constructed perspective is that individuals need to realize that social media will continue to change the culture in many ways with future progress and increased use, and for the initial handling of the COVID-19 pandemic to minimize a greater impact.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Social media during the Covid-19 Pandemic became a special concern by the community because at this time people focused their attention on seeing, reading, and digesting information in it because it was very related to what they felt. Therefore, the existence of social media as a covid-19 information facility would be better given special learning to the community, so that people can be more careful in choosing the information to be read.

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