Persuasive Communication Strategies To Reduce Student Anxiety About Infodemic Covid-19 Through Memes

Gushevinalti[1*]

1. Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Bengkulu, WR Supratman Kandang Limun, Indonesia

* E-mail of the corresponding author: gushevinalti@unib.ac.id

Abstract

The rise of information about Covid-19, known as an infodemic in the mass media and social media, makes the audience face a new problem psychically, namely anxiety. The study aimed to describe the appeal of the visual message of Covid 19 memes by students on social media as a persuasive communication strategy. Then categorize the meaning of Covid-19 meme messages based on government policies packaged in educative, informative, entertaining and persuasive messages about Covid-19. This research uses a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques through in-depth observations and interviews. This research informant is a student who often accesses memes about Covid-19 and can give meaning to the Memes. The results showed that the information compiled in memes is the attraction first, the boredom of information in the mass media. In the form of news/text or video, the news is considered not to increase awareness but rather fear that causes anxiety psychically. Second, the message is persuasive. Meme visualization is more exciting, and the message is precise. Students prefer to look for parody information or funny nuances because the message is easy to accept and visually exciting and entertaining. The meaning of the Covid-19 Meme tends to be denotative. That is, students, understand the message conveyed both in the form of images and text with actual meaning.

Keywords: communication strategy, persuasive, Covid-19 Meme, anxiety, infodemic

1. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the countries affected by Covid-19, among more than 160 other countries in the world, and even today, it may increase in number. The Indonesian government has determined that this virus outbreak is a national disaster. Exacerbated by the reliable news daily, the number of positive cases of Covid-19 continues to increase significantly and dynamically, and the movement of the curve continues to climb. Of course, this condition has caused panic and cross-opinions that have been caused outside the context of handling the virus itself, even becoming a political and economic commodity.

Therefore, it seems premature to assume that anxiety and other health problems associated with SARS-CoV-2 must be highly relevant and relatively high in people with pathological health anxiety (Sauer et al., 2022). The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia has had a multi-sectoral impact, from health, education, social, and economical to worship activities in the community. People may turn to digital communication to replace face-to-face interactions during physical distancing, such as during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, persistent digital inequality demonstrates that not everyone is equally able or willing to expand digital communications during public health crises (Nguyen et al., 2021)

Anxiety on social media is accelerating faster than the spread of Covid-19. The information spread through social and traditional media and government or health agencies has reached a colossal scale, which is certainly unprecedented in human history. The death count followed closely as it went up, at least for now. Quarantine images and stories are everywhere. As a result, the health risks of this epidemic are framed as frightening and uncontrollable, contributing to the epidemic of fear. According to Sharrock et al. (2021) Examine the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on the content and type of posts published in two moderated OHCs (eating disorders and depression/anxiety) by comparing the categorization of posts written before and after lockdown and about and not writing about large become popular

As a plague, it certainly frightens everyone, regardless of position, age, occupation, social status, religion,

ethnicity and even gender. All are potentially affected. For this reason, the government's appeal is quite logical with policies such as maintaining cleanliness, #Stayathome aka #dirumahaja, social distancing or social distancing in crowds, until physical distancing becomes a policy from the government. Not without reason, this is also a WHO policy that handles this disaster globally / internationally. This virus has disrupted the order of everyone's lives, the tendency of society to panic and become psychologically insecure, not to mention those that impact the economic situation, aka people's well-being. To examine the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on content and type of posts published in two moderated OHCs–eating disorders and depression/anxiety – by comparing categorizations of posts written before versus after the lockdown and about vs not about the pandemic (Elran-Barak, 2021).

Mass panic can only be countered with information. However, of course, not all information can be trusted, especially on social media, which is difficult to contain the message. Consuming too much information can also weaken people's psychics. As long as people do not understand Covid-19, fear and panic will continue to be experienced. Moreover, diverse information can cause psychic disorders. At the same time, the body's immune system will decrease, so the chances of getting the disease are more significant. Social media can and should be leveraged to support public health responses. The public is asked to understand the Covid-19 virus, which has now been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization or WHO. People's understanding of this virus is believed not to cause panic. This incident caused mass panic in the community. Many people panic buying by buying household needs in large quantities; the price of masks is getting higher, as spices are believed to increase endurance. For example, during a massive quarantine of the people in China, it is essential to use social media judiciously because social media provides an opportunity to communicate the reasons for quarantine, providing certainty and practical advice to prevent rumours and panic. Here comes the humour in coping with psychological stress caused by drastic life changes and maintaining mental and emotional health (Hussein & Aljamili, 2020). Additionally, numerous large-scale investigations in the general population have supported the link between rising levels of health anxiety and heightened mental suffering connected to COVID-19 (Sauer et al., 2022).

The various forms and nature of messages on social media do not all contain panic. Some examples include courses for health anxiety, generalized anxiety, panic disorder, mixed depression and anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2022). Lately, there has been a wave of entertaining messages that still contain preventive meanings. The presence of memes about Covid 19 is easily accessible to the public. "Meme" is one of the artworks that has recently widely appeared among netizens on social media. The goal is to identify and analyze specific symbolic patterns in Jordanian social media cartoons and memes related to COVID-19 to show how humour can be used as a means of alleviating the gloom caused by the pandemic by using data from social acceptance examinations. Semiotic point of view (Hussein & Aljamili, 2020).

In the digital age, memes circulating are no longer understood to be limited to small units of culture that are spread from person to person by copying or imitation. However, nowadays, the term meme refers to the replication of a person's photo or image that is transformed into another form, coupled with various writings that are usually satire or jokes through Windows (and other operating systems) internet users. Memes can develop with imitations carried out by humans according to the ideas stored in the brain and spread with the process of imitation and posts carried out by netizens (Dewi Surya, 2019)

Memes are information in the form of ideas, ideologies, images, videos or wording in the form of hashtags that become popular because they spread so quickly and can inhabit someone's mind and transmit so quickly to society as the virus is transmitted. However, the memes referred to in this paper are "internet memes" that have characteristics that can spread quickly in online media, are synonymous with entertaining jokes, are sometimes educational, and are a potential forum for media criticism, especially criticism of the government and politicians. Memes are units that spread through social media along with journalistic reportage.

Interaction in the digital world has undergone changes that hone creativity. Communication messages are not always in the form of writing or video; they can also be memes. The term meme was developed by Limor Shifman (2012) into "internet meme". Shifman writes that internet memes can be treated as modern (posts) in the form of "folklore" built with norms and values through cultural artefacts such as photoshopped images or urban legends. Memes as a culture on the internet show how ideas are imitated (imitated), spread and mediated from person to person through interaction or conversation, either through the 'analogue' medium or the 'digital' medium (Brunello, 2012). Internet memes come in the form of a combination of images, photos, slides and text to respond to an issue being discussed in social discourse.

As a form of innovation in the idea of digital technology, the appeal of internet memes is often loaded (in posts)

along with other messages according to topics or stories currently hot in society and discussed by netizens in a chat on social media. At this time of interaction on social media, memes always come with the diverse message content. Apart from just humour, "memes" also often contain slander, innuendo, criticism and even 'ridicule' against candidates, politicians, governments and anyone who is used as the object of discussion in the Meme.

In his book, Shifman (2013) explains that there are two controversies surrounding memes, namely "biological analogies" and "who is the boss". Biological analogies have to do with a strong tendency to equate memes with viruses and genes—meme-as-viral analogy, seeing similarities between memes and diseases. Think of memes as a culture equivalent to the flu, transmitted through communication (equivalent to sneezing). In internet culture, this metaphor is prevalent in the evident discourse on content. However, Henry Jenkins and his colleagues assert that this metaphor has been used in issues where people are conceptualized as helpless and passive, prone to media domination. The biological metaphor for memes comes from Dawkins taking the work of genetic evolution as his model. Memes are folk productions that comment on events, followed by specific templates of popular online images (Rintel, 2013).

However, in its development, "memes" are not only in the form of images. More specifically, according to Lonnberg et al. (2020), more prevalent memes are used in cyberspace.   No different according (Hussein & Aljamili, 2020; Lonnberg et al., 2020; Prakofjewa et al., 2020) describe images edited from fragments of videos and photos spread through the internet. Memes contain humour, flashes, criticisms and expressions of ideas about current phenomena that are being hotly discussed. Memes are packaged in such a way as to bring out the meaning of netizens' criticism following the theme carried by the creator as a form of conveying ideas and forms of criticism of social issues, political events and government policies that are now widely spread in cyberspace or social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

1.1.   Problem Research

Based on the background above, the formulation of this research problem is as follows:

- How do students interpret the Covid 19 meme message they accessed about the government's policy on work-from-home social distancing / physical distancing?
- What is the visual and verbal appeal of Covid 19 memes that students access to overcome panic about the dangers of spreading the Coronavirus?

1.2. Research Objectives

This study aimed to describe the attractiveness of visual and verbal messages of Covid-19 memes on social media accessed by students as a way to overcome panic during a health emergency. Then categorize the meaning of the Covid-19 meme message based on government policies regarding lockdown, work from home, social distancing / physical distancing and a healthy lifestyle packaged in educational, informative, entertaining and persuasive messages about Covid-19.

2. Ingredients and Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study examines the form of Covid-19 memes as a message and in communicating through social media. Hall (in Eriyanto, 2003) explains that "the main question of the critical paradigm is the existence of different forces in society that control the communication process". The critical paradigm shows a critical attitude towards media judgment and the way it constructs reality through its way of presenting reality, such as through Covid-19 "memes" on social media. Data was obtained through literature studies and based on observations and interviews. At the same time, the method used is ethnography, more precisely virtual ethnography, as a research strategy. Since Denzin and Lincoln (1994), qualitative research has been defined as research that uses nature to investigate a phenomenon and is carried out using various methods. Qualitative research seeks to find and describe the activities carried out, and the impact of the actions on their lives(Fadli, 2021).

2.2. Research Informant

The informants in this study were Communication Science students of FISIP Bengkulu University who took the Sociology of Mass Communication course and often accessed memes about Covid-19 during the health

emergency period set by Bengkulu University until October 2020. Content consumption activities include memes on social media students who post, comment, and even distribute Covid-19 memes. The choice of the period during the Work From Home (WFH) period is that this period is an opportunity given by the campus to learn from home, so effectively, this period is set to be a time limit for student activities.

2.3. Data Collection Techniques

As stated in the research design, this research uses virtual ethnographic methods. The data or information of this research is collected using interviews and observations conducted through instant messaging or social media. In addition, this method is also carried out to support social distancing policies.

The aspects explored in this study are: what activities do students do during the study period from home, using social media during the holiday period due to virus prevention, and what information is accessed while studying from home? Why access covid 19 meme? What is the visual and verbal appeal of the Meme? How do students interpret the message contained in the covid 19 meme?

In addition to interviews, data was also obtained from observations made by observing student activities that became information on their social media. Associated activities include sharing/posting Covid-19 memes or commenting on posts. This research also uses literature studies, which require several references such as textbooks and research journals by the research theme.

2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Researchers use the Miles and Huberman model (in Yusuf, 2015) as a data analysis process. This model is often referred to as the flow model. In this model, there are three stages in analyzing data as follows: The process of selecting, centring, simplifying, and transforming the data that has been collected. Data reduction is necessary to sharpen, select, focus, discard and organize data in one way to make final conclusions.

3. Discussion

3.1 Research Results

The informant of this research is a student of Communication Science, Fisip, University of Bengkulu, who took the Sociology of Mass Communication course. There are no specific criteria for determining informants because the research aspect is one of the material discussions in the course that discusses societal changes in the use of social media and media hegemony. Researchers have an excellent opportunity to discuss the Pandemic phenomenon due to the spread of Covid-19. Although students are classified as highly educated groups who do not panic in this pandemic era, it turns out that this assumption is wrong because all informants experience panic because of the very high access to social media, which always displays information that informants find very scary about Covid-19, plus the absence of education they feel and receive. This research will display information representing the opinions of different informants who actively provide information based on discussions or directed discussion forums in the class. In addition, researchers are also connected to their social media in making observations.

The results showed that all informants actively use social media, not even a few of the informants who have more than two social media. The most widely used social media are Instagram and Twitter because they are more varied and contemporary for generation Z. However, Facebook is also the choice of social media because of its more comprehensive features in text, image and video posts. However, informants think Facebook is used less often because teenagers do not access it much. The instant messaging media used by students is WhatsApp and telegram. All students use WhatsApp tap very quickly to spread and receive messages. Youtube is also the most accessed media by students, given the advantages of this media over other media that present sophisticated visualization and audio. Informants refer to it as the television of the future.

3.2 Meaning of Covid-19 Meme Message on Health Protocols

Student literacy about disinformation and misinformation about Covid 19 from classroom discussions is also not the same or varied. Generally, they access misinformation about Covid. Of course, this condition is very worrying because so much misinformation is circulating on social media today. That information quickly spreads across WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. The feared condition, students trust the information, and it

is firmly entrenched in their minds. The high and low literacy of the community will affect Indonesia's efforts to fight this pandemic. Persoalan lainnya yang ditekan pada penelitian ini adalah akses informasi mahasiswa tentang Covid 19 di masa WFH. The research found information related to Covid-19 literacy in students, the effect of e-learning during the pandemic on work cognition and student metacognitive awareness, fake news/hoaxes about Covid-19 in society and its implications in learning, as well as perceptions and online learning patterns experienced by students.

All learning activities are carried out from home during the Work From Home (WFH) period, which has been in effect at Bengkulu University since March 2020. Thus, many college students have activities at home. The results of the study found a variety of opinions regarding the learning from the home policy during the WFH period. Not all students can accept the fact that by studying from home, they spend many quota funds.

During the WFH period, students had much time to access the internet. Students acknowledge that the information accessed is not just about academic development but more about entertainment, meaning that the quota spent is more on trivial things, besides having a sufficient quota because you get quota assistance as a student. Most of the students' learning policies carried out from home are very appropriate to prevent the transmission of the covid 19 virus because if, for example, we continue to do face-to-face learning in the classroom with various kinds of people, it could be that one of the people in the classroom has contracted the covid 19 disease and those of us who are present in the classroom can be infected as well. Contrastingly, several young adults suggested avoiding fear ads because they were uncomfortable, even though many participants emphasized the value of fear-appeal messages in convincing them to adopt healthy behaviours. (Su et al., 2021).

In addition to information about Covid-19 obtained from social media, many students are also looking for information on the official website, which provides complete information on the website of the covid-19 handling task force, such as www.covid19.go.id. On the site, informants get complete and official information updated daily about the number of suspects, the number of specimens, the origin of the province/regency, the number of deaths, the number of recoveries and confirmed cases. This information takes the form of an infographic that is very easy to understand. However, there are times when students access the official website, so that information on social media becomes alternative access. Moreover, student activity on social media is relatively high. So the information encountered and accessed is very diverse and experiences many dynamics. Covid-19 messages that were initially scary or scary were interpreted differently by informants.

The most widely accessed information by students at the beginning of this pandemic was determined to be about health protocols. Choosing to stay at home is the most likely way for informants to avoid contracting Covid-19. Tfire differs from what they accessed on television media in that compliance with health protocols tends to be weak, especially in big cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Central Java. This undisciplined habit has contributed to the increase in Covid-19 cases in some areas. So students choose to leave the house with urgent needs only. The Meme above is a funny persuasive invitation that touches students' affection to comply with health protocols (at home only). Informants think that information in the form of jokes or parodies can increase the body's immunity so that it always feels entertained but captures a good meaning.

Therefore, people always keep their distance from others to self-isolate so as not to get infected by others because they do not know whom the person is meeting with, whether they have the virus or not. Because some people detected with the Coronavirus do not show symptoms, adjusting the distance must be done so that the spread of this Coronavirus does not infect other people. Indeed, this is taboo or unusual for everyone because they are not used to it. In contrast, before the virus spread, people freely met and reprimanded by shaking hands or hugging others. However, after the virus, people have to manage their distance or distance from each other so that people think of it as divorce or separation because they can no longer touch.

Unlike the previous picture, the core message you want to convey is to contain a persuasive message to stay at home. However, wrapped in a funny meme that implies that the current safety will be obtained if we adhere to health protocols. Staying at home is one way to avoid activities and meet people or crowding, a spreading medium to break the chain of Covid-19. This is also an appreciation for people who stay at home and listen to government rules so that informants think that if they stay at home, they can help ease the burden on the government and the doctors and nurses who are struggling to solve the fight with Covid-19 even by doing trivial things such as lying down, or something like that is only done inside the house.

Some informants also learned that several influencers and experts had conveyed dubious traditional cures and misinformation about the Covid-19 pandemic on Indonesian social media. One of them is widespread rumours that infrared thermogenic, popularly used to check human body temperature, is believed to cause brain damage.

Egg traders certainly feel the soaring income reduction, people's concerns about Covid-19 and self-anticipation

of social distancing have caused the market to fall; many people are afraid to leave the house and caused many traders lack income due to the decline in the target market. In the interim conclusion of this discussion, the meaning of the Covid-19 Meme tends to be denotative. That is, students, understand the message conveyed in images and text with actual meaning. Although the Meme uses the terms satire and humour, students can correctly interpret health protocols about Covid-19.

3.3 Visual Appeal and Verbal Memes about Covid-19

The appeal of memes about Covid 19 is more in the advantages of the text and animation. A texting series of verbal messages generally have a connotative meaning. This meaning appears more concise and concise but refers to the object of health protocols. Then the study also found that nonverbal messages are also the attraction of Covid-19 memes, how caricature images that are generally used can convey messages. This Meme containing humour in some images also invites attention from the colours displayed. Covid-19 memes can be both animated and text with an impressive selection of fonts full of humour. Humour is something that can arise from the presence of verbal deviations, oddities, peculiarities, and improprieties and bring laughter to the individual due to stimuli from within (not physical stimuli), as well as external stimuli that invite attention and interest to others, and can appear as a refresher of thoughts and channel feelings without causing unpleasant feelings.

The appeal of memes is not separated, also the presence of satire, but it is subtly conveyed. For example, in the picture below, the informant exemplifies one of the examples. During the pandemic, indeed, all aspects of life have reversed. This means that activities that have been normal during the pandemic have changed drastically according to the needs or desires of the community. For example, in the past, masks were not needed when travelling outside the house.

Communication strategies that can be carried out in situations and conditions that are not good at the moment are to continue to provide understanding in the form of education with entertaining packaging to the broader community with the use of media. This is done so that there is no saturation of stress on the community and the wider Indonesian audience in receiving information on handling the COVID-19 virus outbreak. So here, media disseminating educational information can provide solutive information with flexible packaging.

Informants rated memes about Covid-19 on social media amid the development of covid – 19 information as legitimate. Because of the funny message, in addition to entertainment, the Indonesian people are not stressed about receiving information about the development of the number of covid-19 handling, which is increasing every day. Also, to educate the public to continue to follow a healthy lifestyle in handling covid-19 according to health and government procedures and protocols. As an example below, researchers captured a screenshot on Twitter. First, a funny message from @jek, where the tweet reads, "your fingerprints are lost so diligently washing your hands". The tweet from the account intends to entertain the people of Indonesia while constantly reminding the public to wash their hands diligently to avoid contracting the Covid-19 virus by constantly "washing hands" with a hand sanitiser or soap to avoid the Covid-19 virus.

With a funny message, it can also minimize stress and uncontrollable emotions for the Indonesian people who receive less information every day from the news of covid-19. So it takes the name of information that, in addition to providing education, is also providing packaging with a fun element. To maximize the persuasiveness of a message, linguistic cues play an important role along with strategies for determining the content of the message (Li et al., 2021)

The effect of media messages in the broader community is very influential in daily life; messages conveyed to the public by the media, such as the news above, can create behaviour patterns that are different from the public, initially, when the media has not reported information related to the spread of Covid-19. Generally, very few people comply with health protocols because they still take it lightly the spread of Covid-19. However, after the media provides information or measures related to the spread of Covid 19 is very deadly. Anyone who is affected or affected by the spread of covid will be able to make sufferers die. People who were initially ignorant of all government directives and what is happening now begin to behave very carefully by keeping themselves from being affected by the spread of the virus, such as complying with health protocols; the people of Bengkulu began to wear masks when travelling, began to maintain a safe distance and diligently washed their hands.

Some of the reasons found in this study are why accessing the Covid 19 Meme is categorical in two ways: the boredom of seeing information in the mass media. Feeling bored accessing serious information, information in the form of news/text or video news is considered not to increase awareness but rather fear to panic. Students get over of information from various sources. Infodemi indicates all kinds of false and accurate news about Covid-

19. When reading the news about the increasing number of positive cases, students feel that immunity has decreased. Second, the message is persuasive. The visualization of the Meme is more interesting, and the message is just right.

Furthermore, it is more convenient to look for news that is a parody or funny in tone, but the message is easy to accept and visually appealing. The persuasive message made the audience entertained. This is considered suitable to be accessed during a pandemic. Even so, students also realize that the Covid 19 meme can potentially contain disinformation. In general, people are also more likely to be motivated, confident, and receptive to information that conforms to and validates preexisting attitudes and beliefs (Glasdam & Stjernswärd, 2020)

Disinformation also contributes a lot to student panic. The panic caused by the media accelerated faster than the spread of the Coronavirus itself on a relatively large scale. Therefore, currently, while handling the Coronavirus, the government is also mobilizing the authorities to prosecute and arrest people who write hoax news or disinformation. The fear and panic consumed by the public about this false news have resulted in quite sad and alarming impacts, such as hoarding of food staples, hoarding of masks, hand sanitisers, gloves and even vitamin C, which is indeed needed during outbreaks like this, some are indeed used for their own needs, but some people resell these items at costly prices, even many times the original price, and this hoarding has resulted in a scarcity of stock supplies of these items, both in pharmacies and stalls.

Because panic buying is caused a lot by news on social media and untrusted media on the internet, the impact of the panic will also not only be felt by the people who read but will also have an impact on the decline in the level of public trust in the government in dealing with the corona outbreak caused by conspiracy theories in hoax news and disinformation. Issues like this will trigger tremendous panic from the public, exceedingly ordinary and traditional people who tend to believe and re-spread the news they read quickly; this will be very detrimental to various circles and, of course, the government that handles it, it is possible that the people will act excessively anarchist and paranoid instead of anticipating the situation.

Generally, students have a way of responding to disinformation news, namely by filtering the information they get. Such as looking at a site or website, if it comes from a site that has not been verified as an official press agency, for example, using a blog domain, then the information can be said to be dubious. In addition, also look for references in the form of similar news from official online sites, then compare the content to determine whether it is the same or different so that readers can get a more balanced conclusion. We also have to be smart in media. Thus, student literacy is quite good in responding to Disinformation about Covid-19.

3.4 Discussion: Communication Panic By Covid-19 Information

Panic can be caused one of them is due to disinformation. Disinformation is false information deliberately spread to deceive the public and destabilize the situation. The ease of spreading messages through social media makes it easier for hoaxes to develop quickly. In a matter of minutes, it can be said that it has been shared hundreds of times by social media users. Disinformation is the conveyance of misinformation (deliberately) to confuse others. So, according to students who are informants, how to respond to misinformation or news classified as disinformation first look for the truth about the information we receive, filter or sort the information we receive and can do media literacy. This iteration of media encourages us to improve our ability to understand and analyze the content of the media. This means that journalists must provide credible information on this COVID-19 exaggeration, 'infodemic', that can divert all other content and values in life (Glasdam & Stjernswärd, 2020).

In a state of panic, students generally look for information on the internet about Covid-19. When panicking, the most sought-after theme of information is the spread of Covid and how to deal with it and events worldwide. Many things are scary with the information. Finally, the saturation in consuming this information brings students to the condition of getting out of panic and not being dissolved in frightening information. So that one of the efforts made is to access Covid-19 memes which are very easy to find on social media and instant messaging. The message in this picture wants to remind us to maintain cleanliness in the midst of the Covid-19 virus, which can spread quickly. Even though we are with family, the closest people and even loved ones still have to keep our bodies clean by washing our hands and using hand sanitisers.

This research reveals that health protocols packaged in memes are more accessible for students to interpret and understand as an effort to avoid panic information about Covid-19. This Corona phenomenon has caused new problems, and many people give themselves the title of status expert. Many netizens seem to understand and understand the most about Covid-19; when there is one phenomenon that shocks, a person can bestow himself as an expert who knows best about all problems in this world without realizing the true meaning and substance.

This can lead to disinformation, malinformation, and misinformation (Hoaxes, hate speech, and blasphemy), which can negatively impact social life. Many of them understand, but not many understand that the lack of efficiency of information that is too free invites many other problems. The most fundamental problem about the Corona phenomenon in the media, which is hazardous, is when a person has had enough knowledge and experience and acts according to the experience. Further work is needed to develop a persuasive message for a large group of sceptics (Freeman et al., 2021).

This will undoubtedly have an effect on people's lives, there are many kinds of community responses in responding to phenomena informed by the media and people who bestow status on themselves as an expert such as some who choose not to follow developments too much because it can increase social anxiety and excessive fear, some do not feel panic but still with an attitude that is wary and fortifies themselves by equipping themselves with adequate knowledge in corona prevention efforts and consistently and obediently following every recommendation and policy imposed by the authorities, some worry too much about the effects of a negative mindset such as worrying too much about the condition of the body, for example when sick with symptoms of fever, cough and laryngitis mindset immediately assumes, infected with corona virus, Even though in the midst of anticipation and is always ready to be alert to symptoms that are felt to be essential to do but thinking negatively can suggest and give a lousy psychic to the body, this can result in lowering the immune system and even causing the body to be easily infected by the virus and the virus is easy to develop quickly.

4. Conclusion

The abundance of information allows everyone to get information very quickly. The information circulating on social media or the internet is not always information of a severe nature but also a lot in the form of parodies or memes about Covid-19. Student access to memeCovid-19 is an effort to reduce panic over coercive and frightening information.

The results showed that students in generation Z prefer meme-shaped messages about solicitations to comply with health protocols rather than reading news containing text because there is a lot of disinformation or misinformation. The information compiled in memes has an appeal, namely, First, the boredom of seeing information in the mass media. Feeling bored accessing serious information, information in the form of news/text or video news is considered not to increase awareness but rather fear to panic. Infodemi indicates all kinds of false and accurate news about Covid-19. Second, the message is persuasive. The visualization of the Meme is more exciting, and the message is just right. Furthermore, looking for news with a parody or funny tone is more convenient, but the message is easy to accept and visually appealing. The persuasive message made the audience entertained.

The meaning of Covid-19 memes tends to be denotative. That is, students, understand the message conveyed in images and text with actual meaning. Although the Meme uses the term satire, and humour, students can correctly interpret health protocols about Covid-19, namely wearing masks, washing hands and keeping a distance from others.

Reference

Cambra-Fierro, J., Fuentes-Blasco, M., Gao, L. X., Melero-Polo, I., & Trifu, A. (2022). The influence of communication in destination imagery during COVID-19. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 64(October 2021). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102817

Dewi Surya, R. (2019). "Meme" Sebagai Sebuah Pesan Dan Bentuk Hiperrealitas Di Media Sosial. Mediakom : Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, 1(1), 16–29.

Elran-Barak, R. (2021). Analyses of posts written in online eating disorder and depression/anxiety moderated communities: Emotional and informational communication before and during the COVID-19 outbreak. Internet Interventions, 26, 100438. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.invent.2021.100438

Fadli, M. R. (2021). Memahami desain metode penelitian kualitatif. Humanika, 21(1), 33–54. https://doi.org/10.21831/hum.v21i1.38075

Freeman, D., Loe, B. S., Yu, L. M., Freeman, J., Chadwick, A., Vaccari, C., Shanyinde, M., Harris, V., Waite, F., Rosebrock, L., Petit, A., Vanderslott, S., Lewandowsky, S., Larkin, M., Innocenti, S., Pollard, A. J., McShane, H., & Lambe, S. (2021). Effects of different types of written vaccination information on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in the UK (OCEANS-III): a single-blind, parallel-group, randomized controlled trial. The Lancet Public Health, 6(6), e416–e427. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(21)00096-7

Glasdam, S., & Stjernswärd, S. (2020). Information about the COVID-19 pandemic – A thematic analysis of different ways of perceiving true and untrue information. Social Sciences & Humanities Open, 2(1), 100090. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100090

Hussein, A. T., & Aljamili, L. N. (2020). COVID-19 humor in Jordanian social media: A socio-semiotic approach. Heliyon, 6(12), e05696. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05696

Li, S., Wang, Y., Filieri, R., & Zhu, Y. (2021). Eliciting positive emotion through strategic responses to COVID-19 crisis: Evidence from the tourism sector. Tourism Management, 104485. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104485

Lonnberg, A., Xiao, P., & Wolfinger, K. (2020). The growth, spread, and mutation of internet phenomena: A study of memes. Results in Applied Mathematics, 6, 3–9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rinam.2020.100092

Nguyen, M. H., Hargittai, E., & Marler, W. (2021). Digital inequality in communication during a time of physical distancing: The case of COVID-19. Computers in Human Behavior, 120, 106717. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106717

Prakofjewa, J., Kalle, R., Belichenko, O., Kolosova, V., & Sõukand, R. (2020). Re-written narrative: transformation of the image of Ivan-chaj in Eastern Europe. Heliyon, 6(8). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04632

Sauer, K. S., Schmidt, A., Jungmann, S. M., Bailer, J., & Witthöft, M. (2022). Do patients with pathological health anxiety fear COVID-19? A time-course analysis of 12 single cases during the "first wave" of the COVID-19 pandemic in Germany. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 152(December 2021), 110687. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2021.110687

Sharrock, M. J., Mahoney, A. E. J., Haskelberg, H., Millard, M., & Newby, J. M. (2021). The uptake and outcomes of Internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy for health anxiety symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Journal of Anxiety Disorders, 84(October), 102494. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2021.102494

Su, Z., McDonnell, D., Wen, J., Cheshmehzangi, A., Ahmad, J., Goh, E., Li, X., Šegalo, S., Mackert, M., Xiang, Y.-T., & Wang, P. (2021). Young adults' preferences for influenza vaccination campaign messages: Implications for COVID-19 vaccine intervention design and development. Brain, Behavior, & Immunity - Health, 14(April), 100261. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbih.2021.100261

Author. The author was born in Mukomuko Bengkulu, Indonesia, on August 16, 1978. He has been a lecturer at the Department of Communication Science, FISIP, Bengkulu University since 2001, with competence in Media Communication communication. Currently serves as the Institute for the Development of Information and Communication Technology (LPTIK) Bengkulu University. The author completed her Bachelor's degree in the Department of Communication Science, University of North Sumatra, her Master's Education at the Department of Development and Rural Communication at the Bogor Agricultural Institute, doctoral education was taken at the Social Science Study Program at Airlangga University Surabaya. The subjects taught in lectures are New Media, Sociology of Communication and Mass Communication. Of course, in synergizing with the discussion of the latest courses and studies, the author actively writes in several journals and speakers/presenters at national and international seminars focusing on studies on media literacy and digital literacy. He is active in several organizations/networks such as Leader MAFINDO Bengkulu Region, ASPIKOM, ISKI, AJI Google Initiative (academic trainer), JAPELIDI and as a secretary at the Indonesian Digital Leaders Association, Department of Government Relations and Media Engagement. Address of the author's correspondent: gushevinalti@unib.ac.id