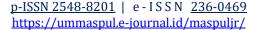


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Digital Campaign to Combat Violence and Sexual Harassment: Advancing Gender Equality for All Women and Girls

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas kampanye digital dalam meningkatkan kesadaran masyarakat mengenai kesetaraan gender dan mengurangi insiden kekerasan dan pelecehan seksual terhadap perempuan dan anak perempuan. Dengan memanfaatkan platform media sosial dan media online, kampanye digital dapat menjadi alat yang ampuh untuk memobilisasi opini publik dan mendorong perubahan sosial yang diperlukan. Pendekatan penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode campuran (mixed method) yang meliputi wawancara mendalam terhadap 30 narasumber dan penyebaran 200 kuesioner kepada masyarakat di Sumatera Barat, salah satu wilayah dengan tingkat kejadian kekerasan seksual tertinggi di Indonesia (kualitatif-kuantitatif). Data dianalisis menggunakan software Nvivo 12+ dan Smart PLS sehingga diperoleh hasil yang komprehensif dan valid. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kampanye digital mempunyai potensi besar untuk mempengaruhi sikap masyarakat terhadap isu gender, meningkatkan pemahaman tentang kesetaraan gender, dan membantu mengurangi angka kekerasan dan pelecehan seksual. Studi ini memberikan rekomendasi bagi pembuat kebijakan dan pemangku kepentingan untuk meningkatkan adopsi dan penggunaan kampanye digital sebagai strategi utama untuk mencapai kesetaraan gender dan melindungi perempuan dan anak perempuan dari kekerasan.

Kata Kunci: kesetaraan gender. kampanye digital, kekerasan seksual pelecehan seksual

Abstract

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of digital campaigns in increasing public awareness about gender equality and reducing the incidence of violence and sexual harassment against women and girls. By leveraging social media platforms and online media, digital campaigns can be a powerful tool for mobilizing public opinion and driving the necessary social change. The research approach used is a mixed method which includes in-depth interviews with 30 interviewees and the distribution of 200 questionnaires to the community in West Sumatra, one of the regions with the highest incidence of sexual violence in Indonesia (qualitative-quantitative). The data was analyzed using Nvivo 12+ software and Smart PLS so that comprehensive and valid results were obtained. This research shows that digital campaigns have great potential to influence people's attitudes towards gender issues, increase understanding of gender equality, and help reduce the rate of sexual violence and harassment. The study provides recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders to increase the adoption and use of digital campaigns as a key strategy to achieve gender equality and protect women and girls from violence.

Keywords: gender equality. digital campaign, sexual violence, sexual harassment

Introduction

Gender equality has emerged as one of the most critical global issues, particularly in the context of international efforts toward sustainable development. Through Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5: Gender Equality), the United Nations has designated gender equality as its fifth goal, focusing on the empowerment of women and girls worldwide (United Nations, 2023). In Indonesia, efforts to promote gender equality have been supported by policies 2000. most notably through Presidential Instruction of the Republic of Indonesia No. 9 of 2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, especially in addressing the rising incidence of sexual violence and harassment.

The increasing number of sexual violence and harassment cases in Indonesia particularly in the province of West Sumatra—illustrates the urgency of this issue. According to data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP), 167 cases of violence and sexual harassment were recorded in 2023, with a continual yearly increase in sexual violence (KemenPPPA, 2023). These acts of violence occur not only in public spaces but also in supposedly safe environments such as households and schools. The impact extends beyond physical harm, causing deep psychological trauma, especially for victims who are predominantly women and girls.

Conceptually, gender equality in combating all forms of harassment and violence is defined as the equal right of men and women to make choices freely without pressure or restriction (McDonald, 2000). This includes the right to equal opportunities in developing personal and collective potential (Williamsin & Baird, 2014). In practice. however. the reality disheartening: women and girls continue to be marginalized due to social restrictions, patriarchal traditions, and cultural norms (Sudirman & Susilawaty, 2022). Therefore, promoting gender equality is considered

vital for upholding humanitarian values and normative principles that oppose exploitation and all forms of violence against women (Razavi, 2006).

Gender equality efforts in Indonesia officially began with the 2000 Presidential Instruction mentioned earlier. However, implementation remains difficult, and many still lack a proper understanding of what gender equality entails. As a result, its achievement remains limited, leading to continued incidents of gender-based Regulatory and harassment. support has been strengthened through Law No. 12 of 2022 on the Crime of Sexual Violence (UU-TPKS), which includes six core elements: (1) classification of sexual violence crimes, (2) sanctions and legal actions, (3) procedural law from reporting to verdict execution, (4) victims' rights to protection, handling, and recovery, (5) and (6) coordination and prevention, monitoring-including the active role of society and families in both prevention and response.

Efforts to prevent violence against women and children must involve cross-sectoral collaboration and community participation, of including contribution the nongovernmental organizations. These organizations play a crucial role in mobilizing public awareness and advocacy programs on gender-based violence (Magar, 2003). To anticipate and mitigate such violence, consistent public education—both offline and online—is necessary. One digital strategic method is through campaigns and social media outreach.

Digital media has become an increasingly relevant platform for raising public awareness about gender equality and preventing sexual violence and harassment. With the rise of social media users in Indonesia—reaching 191 million active users in 2022 (Widi, 2023)—these platforms hold vast potential for disseminating information and shaping public opinion (Fitriani et al., 2022).

Despite this promising potential, research on the effectiveness of digital campaigns in promoting gender equality and preventing sexual violence remains limited. Most previous studies have focused on direct, face-to-face educational efforts, which, although important, often fall short in terms of reach and efficiency. Therefore, this study aims to explore the extent to which digital campaigns can increase public awareness and drive behavioral change toward achieving gender equality and reducing gender-based violence.

This research employs a mixed-methods combining quantitative approach, qualitative data to offer a comprehensive In-depth analysis. interviews were conducted with 30 participants from various backgrounds, including government officials, NGO representatives, survivors of violence. Additionally, 200 questionnaires were distributed to assess public participation and perception regarding digital campaigns on gender equality.

Based on this introductory overview, the researcher sees the urgent need for a study focused on delivering gender-related information through digital platforms to promote gender equality for women and girls. One of the central research problems is the lack of gender awareness within society, which contributes to social inequality. Therefore, the specific objective of this study is to examine the role and effectiveness of digital campaigns in combating sexual violence and harassment toward women and girls.

This study is centered on the province of West Sumatra, which has shown a significant increase in gender-based violence. According to 2023 data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, West Sumatra ranked among the highest in Sumatra, with 167 reported cases and an annual increase of 6–9%. These incidents predominantly occurred

in households, public facilities, and schools, encompassing sexual, physical, and psychological violence.

Given this rising trend, it is crucial to enhance public understanding of gender equality (SDG 5) through ongoing education across various platforms. Digital and social media campaigns offer an effective and scalable solution. This study proposes the development of visually appealing and informative digital content to address the issue, representing a departure from traditional, location-bound approaches that may be less accessible to women and girls.

In conducting this study, the researcher developed systematic conceptual a framework aligned with the theories underpinning the research. This framework outlines the structure of the study and serves as a guide in the research design and implementation. It was constructed based on a theoretical foundation, enabling the researcher to map out the necessary stages to achieve gender equality. This conceptual structure is elaborated in the research project plan, designed to clearly illustrate the logical flow of the study and the interaction between relevant variables and concepts.

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The research project undertaken by the researcher is aligned with the Research Roadmap of Universitas Ekasakti (Figure 1). This study addresses a strategic issue, focusing on the theme of "the development of media literacy and digital and electronic media campaigns." The topic directly reflects the university's research priorities, emphasizing the utility and applicability of information technology and mass media systems in shaping public character and promoting social development. By aligning with this strategic framework, the study contributes to the broader institutional goal of leveraging digital tools to foster social awareness and transformation.

Method

This study employs a mixed methods approach, combining both qualitative and

quantitative methods through the use of primary and secondary data sources. The researcher chose this method to obtain more comprehensive, clear, and in-depth findings—particularly relevant in examining societal interactions and raising public awareness about gender equality and efforts to reduce violence and sexual harassment. This approach offers flexibility in exploring individual and group perceptions through qualitative inquiry, while also enabling broader measurement of social phenomena via quantitative analysis (Creswell, 2009).

Research Design and Stages

The study is conducted in two stages. The first stage utilizes a qualitative approach, involving in-depth interviews aimed at exploring individual perspectives and experiences related to digital campaigns, gender equality, and sexual violence. The second stage applies a quantitative approach, using surveys to assess the extent to which digital campaigns influence public awareness and to identify the factors affecting participation in such campaigns. The integration of these two approaches allows for a richer and more nuanced understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprises residents of West Sumatra Province, particularly those who have been exposed to participated in digital campaigns addressing gender equality and sexual violence. The qualitative sample is selected purposively, involving 30 participants, including representatives from provincial and local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and survivors of sexual violence. Specifically, the sample includes 3 representatives from provincial government, 4 from local governments, 3 NGOs working on women's and children's empowerment, and 20 survivors of sexual violence who voluntarily shared their experiences.

For the quantitative phase, a total of 200 social media users were selected through random sampling to complete an online questionnaire designed to measure their participation in digital campaigns and their perceptions of campaign effectiveness.

Data Collection Techniques

Primary data were collected through semistructured in-depth interviews and the distribution of structured questionnaires. Interviews lasted between 30 to 60 minutes, were recorded with participants' consent, then analyzed. transcribed. and questionnaire was distributed using online platforms such as Google Forms to reach social media users in West Sumatra. It consisted of demographic questions and Likert-scale items designed to assess respondents' perceptions of digital campaign effectiveness.

In addition, secondary data were drawn from official government reports, such as those published by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MoWECP), the annual reports of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), and relevant scholarly literature on digital campaigns and gender equality. These secondary sources served to enrich the analysis and provide broader context for understanding sexual violence and prevention strategies.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, wherein the researcher identified recurring themes from the interview transcripts. The process was facilitated using Nvivo 12+ software, which enabled systematic coding and theme categorization. Meanwhile, quantitative data were analyzed using Smart PLS for both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to illustrate the distribution and characteristics of the respondents, while inferential

statistics were used to examine the relationships between variables such as participation levels and perceived campaign effectiveness.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity and reliability, several techniques were employed. For qualitative data, data triangulation and member checking were used. Triangulation involved comparing findings across different sources, while member checking involved requesting participants to review their interview transcripts for accuracy. For the quantitative instruments, content validity was verified by involving experts in gender equality and sexual violence, and reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with scores above 0.70 considered acceptable.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, ethical principles were upheld. All participants were informed of the study's purpose and data collection procedures and were required to sign an informed consent form prior to participation. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, and all collected data were used solely for research purposes.

Expected Outcomes

The final findings of this study provide both descriptive and statistical insights into gender equality, gender disparity, behavioral change, and sexual violence against women and girls. The research also offers relevant recommendations, policies, and legal actions should be undertaken by enforcement and stakeholders to reduce and prevent gender-based violence. It aims to effective sanctions propose against perpetrators and to reinforce social protection through digital literacy and targeted public engagement.

Result and Discussion

This study involved 200 respondents, the majority of whom were female (68%), while male respondents made up 32%. Most participants were aged between 18 and 35 years (75%). A significant majority of respondents (85%) reported being active social media users on a daily basis, with the most used platforms being Instagram (42%), Twitter (30%), and Facebook (18%). These findings indicate that social media serves as a primary channel for the public to access information related to social issues, including digital campaigns on gender equality and sexual violence.

About 70% of respondents stated that they had participated in or followed digital campaigns related to gender equality and sexual violence, such as the #MeToo or #MulaiBicara movements. Among them, 65% acknowledged that these campaigns had increased their awareness of sexual violence issues, while 58% reported a positive change in their attitudes after engaging with the campaigns. Additionally, 60% of female respondents expressed that they felt more empowered to report experiences of harassment or violence following their exposure digital campaigns.

However, male participation in such campaigns was relatively low. Only 32% of male respondents actively supported the campaigns, while the majority acted as passive observers. This highlights a challenge in encouraging greater male involvement in digital advocacy for gender equality.

A total of 72% of respondents agreed that digital campaigns enhanced their understanding of gender equality and women's rights in protection from sexual violence. Nevertheless, only 40% stated that the campaigns motivated them to take concrete action, such as speaking out about

harassment or reporting incidents. Moreover, 48% of respondents believed that the messages delivered through digital campaigns often lose momentum due to shifting public focus, while 55% noted that digital campaigns do not always reach all layers of society, particularly those living in remote areas with limited internet access.

Discussion

digital The findings indicate that campaigns—particularly social through media—play a significant role in raising public awareness about gender equality and sexual violence. A majority of respondents (65%) reported increased understanding after engaging in such campaigns. This supports existing literature, which identifies social media as a powerful tool for rapidly disseminating social messages, especially among younger generations who are active digital users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Digital campaigns offer a space for individuals to learn, share experiences, and participate in social movements without geographic constraints.

However, this study also reveals a key limitation: the translation of awareness into real action remains limited. Despite increased awareness, only 40% respondents were motivated to take direct action. This aligns with Bennett and findings, Segerberg's (2012)highlight that digital campaigns often result in short-term engagement without sustained or long-term impact. In the context of gender equality advocacy, this suggests the need for stronger bridges between digital awareness and real-world action—such as fostering more local community initiatives or public education programs.

Another critical issue identified is the limited involvement of men in gender equality campaigns. With only one-third of male respondents participating actively, the study underscores the need to engage men more fully as allies in combating gender-based violence. Prior research has shown

that men can play a pivotal role in supporting gender equality and ending violence against women (Peacock Levack. 2004). The lack of male stem from limited participation may understanding or because campaigns often target women as the primary audience. Thus, digital campaigns should adopt more inclusive messaging that encourages men to act as agents of change.

The short-lived nature of digital campaign momentum was also noted as a challenge. Nearly half of the respondents (48%) felt that digital campaign messages were quickly overshadowed by other trending topics. This suggests the need for more sustainable campaign strategies that ensure continuous public engagement. Furthermore, since 55% of respondents acknowledged that digital campaigns do not reach all societal segments—especially those in rural or underserved areas—offline strategies must be integrated to ensure inclusivity. A hybrid approach that combines online and offline efforts will be more effective in reaching broader audiences and reinforcing the campaign's messages.

stakeholders Collaboration among is creating lasting impact. essential to Governments must ensure that robust legal frameworks support digital campaigns, while civil society organizations should engage directly with communities through advocacy and empowerment programs. By combining digital outreach with communitybased actions, society can move toward more substantial and sustainable social change in eradicating sexual violence and promoting gender equality.

Conclusion

This study reveals that digital campaigns through social media have significant effectiveness in raising public awareness regarding gender equality and sexual violence. The majority of respondents, particularly women, reported an increased understanding after engaging with digital campaigns such as #MeToo #MulaiBicara. These findings support the existing literature emphasizing the power of social media in disseminating information and enhancing public awareness on social (Kaplan issues & Haenlein, 2010). Furthermore, digital campaigns have contributed to encouraging open dialogue about the rights of women and girls in the public sphere.

Although digital campaigns have proven effective in increasing awareness, this study also identifies limitations in long-term impact and tangible behavioral change. Only 40% of respondents felt compelled to take real action, such as reporting violence or supporting victims. actively consistent with Bennett and Segerberg's (2012) findings, which state that digital campaigns often fall short in mobilizing sustained action without structural support. Additionally, the low participation of men in gender equality campaigns highlights the need for more inclusive strategies. The involvement of men as allies in ending violence is critical, gender-based emphasized by Peacock and Levack (2004); however, current digital campaigns appear effective outreach lack to this to demographic.

To achieve greater impact, digital campaigns must be integrated with realworld initiatives. This study recommends increased collaboration between government non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local communities to develop public education programs, community training, and stronger advocacy for policy reforms. A sustainable and comprehensive approach is essential to ensure that campaigns move beyond awareness-raising and foster real, collective action within society. Noble and Tynes (2016) suggest digital campaigns should that he complemented by offline efforts to ensure that social messages reach all segments of the population, especially those in areas with limited internet access.

In addition, supportive policies and stronger law enforcement mechanisms must be implemented ensure that digital to campaigns result in tangible change in the lives of women and girls. Digital campaigns alone are insufficient; they must be part of a larger, collective effort to promote sustainable social change and to guarantee protection and justice for all individuals particularly women and girls—against sexual violence and discrimination.

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