



## Analysis of #Dirumahaja Hashtags on Instagram Accounts in Persuading People to Stay at Home During the Covid-19 Pandemic in March 2020

Aidina Maharani<sup>1\*</sup>, Arief Nuryana<sup>2</sup>, Yeni Febrianty<sup>3</sup>  
Mercu Buana University Yogyakarta

**Corresponding Author:** Aidina Maharani [aidina@gmail.com](mailto:aidina@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

This study analyzes Instagram content using the hashtag #dirumahaja during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of a campaign to curb virus transmission. It examines how the hashtag conveyed messages to the public. The research focused on Instagram users who posted content with the hashtag in March 2020, using a qualitative descriptive method to explore message dissemination. Findings indicate the AISAS model effectively explains the process, where audiences search for information and share experiences, creating word-of-mouth and virality. This sharing fosters greater public satisfaction and compliance with the campaign's appeal.

## INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus (COVID-19), or severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, is spreading globally, causing worldwide panic and urging people everywhere to reduce outdoor activities and minimize social interactions. The Coronavirus attacks the respiratory system, causing permanent damage to lung tissues, leading to respiratory failure, and potentially resulting in death.

By March 2020, the virus had spread to South Korea, Japan, the Middle East, Europe, Australia, Southeast Asia, and Indonesia. On March 2, 2020, the President officially announced the first confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia (Baskara 2020).

The panic in the country prompted various measures, including educating the public about the virus and campaigning on ways to avoid infection. The government implemented numerous regulations to limit public mobility, such as school closures, Work from Home policies, the shutdown of crowded places, and halting transportation services.

However, a significant challenge remains – many people are indifferent to warnings and the dangers posed by the virus. Staying at home is perceived as unproductive and boring, leading many to continue engaging in activities like socializing, gathering in groups, or visiting crowded places.



Figure 1. number of victims of the COVID-19 outbreak until May 2020

The development of COVID-19 in Indonesia is progressing rapidly. Currently, rapid testing has been conducted for the public. According to data from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, as of May 1, 2020, at 12:00 PM WIB, there are 10,551 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 1,591 recovered patients, and 800 deaths. This rising number must not be ignored. The higher recovery rate compared to the death toll is a positive achievement. The government has made numerous efforts to curb the spread of the virus, including implementing regulations and sanctions (Umasugi, 2020).

Social media plays a significant role in influencing others, making it a fundamental tool for motivators to engage and inspire their audiences. Social media serves multiple functions: to inform, to educate, to entertain, and to influence (Abbas, et.al., 2020). With a vast number of social media users, there is great potential for disseminating government policies at low costs. However, government organizations' use of social media remains limited, necessitating strategies to optimize its use, such as employing hashtag tools on Twitter (Zou, et.al., 2023). This framework is designed to enable government institutions to communicate effectively with the public. Interestingly, this medium can also be applied to non-profit organizations, humanitarian groups, or government agencies.

Instagram, born from advancements in technology and information, is a popular social media platform. (Leaver, et.al., 2020). Instagram allows users to take photos, apply digital filters, and share them on various social networking services." Based on dailysocial.id, Instagram enables users to capture, edit, and upload photos and videos to their Instagram homepage or other social networks (posts) via iOS, Android, and Windows Phone-based applications. Photos and videos shared by users can be viewed by others (followers) who follow the account (Febiola and Zuhri 2021).

A hashtag (#) is a symbol placed at the beginning of a word or phrase on social networks. Initially used on Twitter, hashtags have since spread to other social platforms. Hashtags function as a way to group information under specific titles, essentially marking certain topics deemed significant. All content related to a hashtag's title is accessible through it. When someone uploads content on social media and adds a hashtag in the description, the content automatically becomes part of the associated hashtag group.

Hashtags help link and group similar content or information, making retrieval easier. As Potnis & Tahamtan, (2021). explained, "A hashtag provides links to the same topic of interest and is used to retrieve and classify images." Buarki and Alkhateeb (2018) also note that hashtags help retrieve information or content and attract social media users' attention. Typically, hashtags are used to search for specific topics, placing the # symbol before a keyword (Prakoso and Noprianto 2019).

Another function of hashtags is to facilitate the search for specific topics or content on social media, an approach proven to be highly effective. Utilizing hashtags significantly broadens content reach, as all users within the social network can view related posts. The more individuals use a hashtag for a particular topic, the wider the reach becomes. Social media algorithms detect such activity, often elevating the topic to a trending or viral status.

Amid efforts to limit public activity and curb the spread of COVID-19, social media has played a crucial role, notably through campaigns like #dirumahaja. This hashtag was launched to encourage people to stay home and follow government advisories to remain safe and prevent infection. The #dirumahaja hashtag serves as a vital tool for spreading information to a broad audience, emphasizing the importance of minimizing outdoor activities and social interactions to curb the virus's spread.

The study employs a non-probability sampling method, which does not provide equal opportunities for all population elements to be selected as samples (Sugiyono, 2011). The specific technique used is purposive sampling, where samples are chosen based on predetermined criteria, making it well-suited for qualitative research.

Instagram has become a widely used social media platform in Indonesia. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many users posted photos, videos, or text accompanied by the #dirumahaja hashtag to inspire others and demonstrate that staying home can still be productive. Engaging activities shared through the hashtag encourage others to follow suit, creating a persuasive effect on the public. Instagram, launched in 2010, is a mobile application designed primarily for photo sharing, with an additional feature for video sharing, albeit with a time limit of less than 60 seconds. Despite this limitation, Instagram's user base has steadily grown, reaching 1 billion active monthly users by June 2018 (Statista, 2018). Indonesia ranks among the countries with the largest Instagram user base globally, making it an excellent platform for disseminating information widely.

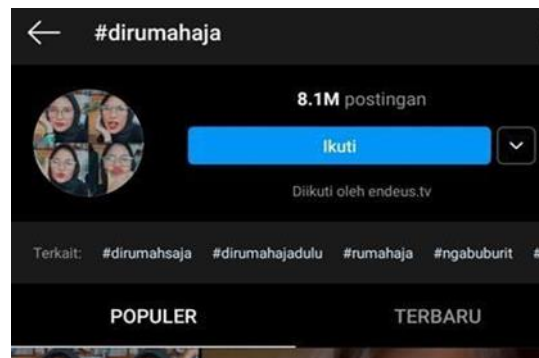


Figure 2. #Dirumahaja hastags on the Instagram platform

Bettinghaus (1973:10) defines persuasion as an effort to influence an individual's thoughts and actions or an interactive relationship where the speaker aims to affect the listener's behavior through auditory and visual communication. Persuasive communication, according to (Wang, et.al., 2023), is a process designed to influence others' thoughts and opinions, aligning them with the communicator's intent without resorting to coercion or threats. Similarly, (Ikrambayevna, 2024), states that persuasive communication aims not only to inform but also to alter attitudes, opinions, or behaviors (Riley, et.al., 2021).

Despite these efforts, some individuals remain indifferent to the seriousness of COVID-19, continuing to leave their homes and interact with others without adhering to safety protocols such as wearing masks or practicing proper hygiene like handwashing and temperature checks. This study seeks to explore how to encourage public compliance with regulations by examining the effectiveness of the #dirumahaja campaign.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media platforms like Instagram have become highly effective tools for delivering persuasive messages. Their capability to disseminate information rapidly through text, images, and videos makes them pivotal in public campaigns. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the hashtag #DiRumahAja emerged as a collective symbol emphasizing the importance of staying home to prevent the virus's spread. Kaplan and Haenlein (2020) highlight that social media facilitates global conversations, while Cotter (2019) notes how Instagram's algorithms and visual features amplify the appeal of persuasive content. Consequently, social media enables the powerful management of messages to influence public behavior effectively.

Persuasion is a communication process aimed at changing the attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs of an audience. (Rosenberg, et.al., 2022) through the Elaboration Likelihood Model, explain that persuasion occurs via two pathways: the central route, which relies on logical arguments, and the peripheral route, which depends on emotional or symbolic elements. In the context of #DiRumahAja, visual and emotional elements such as family images, creative home activities, or motivational videos were used to strengthen the message. Wang, et.al., (2023). adds that technology can be an effective persuasive tool when supported by relevant and engaging message design.

Hashtags are vital in social media communication, particularly in digital campaigns. They help organize information, extend message reach, and build collective identities. (Mihailidis, 2020). states that hashtags function as connectors between users and specific topics, making them powerful tools for uniting diverse voices on social media. For #DiRumahAja, the hashtag fostered collective awareness about the importance of staying home, encouraging users to share positive activities during the pandemic. Suryani, (2024) emphasizes that hashtags can strengthen campaign narratives by creating emotional connections between the message and its audience.

The #DiRumahAja hashtag became a symbol of social movement during the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. It served as a persuasive tool to reduce public mobility by stressing the importance of staying home. This movement leveraged collaborative content such as online challenges, inspirational stories, and educational posts to engage audiences. Nahar (2020) explains that social media campaigns during crises require messages that are consistent, relevant, and easily understood by audiences. In this regard, #DiRumahAja successfully delivered a simple yet powerful message, fostering a collective sense of responsibility among the public.

Instagram, as a visual-based platform, facilitates the use of images, videos, and text to strengthen campaign narratives. Highfield and Leaver (2016) suggest that consistent visual alignment between imagery and messaging enhances the effectiveness of social media campaigns. In the #DiRumahAja campaign, many accounts employed visual elements such as illustrations of home activities, motivational videos, and eye-catching color schemes to attract attention. Additionally, features like Instagram Stories and IGTV were utilized to convey messages interactively and in real time. (Yu, et.al., 2024) identify user

engagement through comments, likes, and reposts as a critical factor in the success of visual-based campaigns.

This review demonstrates that the hashtag #DiRumahAja was an effective persuasive tool in promoting the message to stay home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Its success lay in the combination of engaging visuals, relevant narratives, and active audience participation. Future research could explore the demographic impact on the effectiveness of hashtags or compare similar campaigns across countries to understand the dynamics of global communication during crises.

## **METODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative research method. The phenomenon explored is the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, which began in March 2020. During this period, the public was urged to reduce interpersonal interactions and to conduct activities at home. In qualitative research, the researcher analyzes the meanings behind statements, behaviors, events, and actions of informants. Data collection was conducted through interviews with respondents and by observing their Instagram posts that used the hashtag #dirumahaja. These posts were collected as evidence or documentation. The researcher then described and summarized the findings in a narrative text, supported by evidence.

The hashtag #dirumahaja was a campaign designed to educate the public to stay at home and minimize outdoor activities during the pandemic. The aim was to support physical and social distancing initiatives. Through the hashtag #dirumahaja, the message conveyed is that there are many positive and productive activities that can still be done at home.

This study is grounded in the The Dentsu Way theory. Sugiyama and Andree (2011) in *The Dentsu Way* introduced the AISAS model, which represents an evolution from the traditional AIDMA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Memory, and Action). AIDMA is a simple yet effective model for traditional advertising, particularly for straightforward products, where the primary goal is to influence consumers to choose one brand over others. This model assumes that the information provided by advertisements is sufficient for consumers, enabling them to recall the brand and its promises at the point of purchase.

The AIDMA model is suitable for scenarios where consumers have little incentive to seek additional information about a product beyond what is presented in advertisements. However, in the internet era, consumers can easily access extensive information. This shift has led to the development of “active engagement with information,” wherein after noticing a product, service, or advertisement, consumers voluntarily seek additional information and share interesting findings with others. This transition highlights two unique consumer behaviors—information gathering and sharing—which have become crucial factors in purchase decisions.

Dentsu advocates for a new consumption behavior model known as AISAS (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, Share). Created in 2004 and trademarked in Japan in 2005, AISAS forms the foundation for many of Dentsu's campaigns.

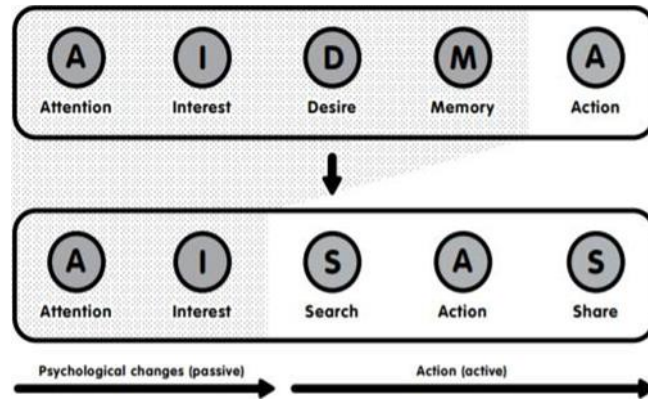


Figure 3 model as the basis of many campaigns.

Sugiyama and Andree (2011:79) argue that AISAS is a model designed to effectively approach target audiences by addressing behavioral changes, particularly in the context of internet technology advancements. AISAS stands for Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share. According to this model:

1. Consumers notice a product, service, or advertisement (Attention).
2. This triggers curiosity or interest (Interest), prompting them to seek additional information (Search).
3. Consumers evaluate the information and decide to purchase (Action).
4. Post-purchase, consumers share their experiences by discussing them with others or posting reviews and comments online (Share).

AISAS reflects a more interactive and technology-driven approach to understanding consumer behavior and is foundational for modern advertising strategies developed by Dentsu. This study adopts the AISAS framework to examine how the hashtag #dirumahaja influences public behavior during the pandemic, highlighting its role in promoting awareness and participation in health campaigns through social media.

## RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on content analysis of the hashtag #dirumahaja on Instagram. The researcher aims to explain how the content associated with this hashtag operates and evaluates whether it effectively conveys the intended message to encourage the public to reduce outdoor activities and thus avoid exposure to the COVID-19 virus. To achieve this, the study utilizes The Dentsu Way theory, specifically the AISAS model (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share). AISAS is a framework designed to effectively engage target audiences by addressing behavioral changes, particularly in the context of advancements in internet technology. The researcher identified eight Instagram users as samples who posted content using the hashtag #dirumahaja during March 2020. These samples were analyzed to understand how their posts aligned

with the AISAS model and how effectively the campaign communicated its message to the public.

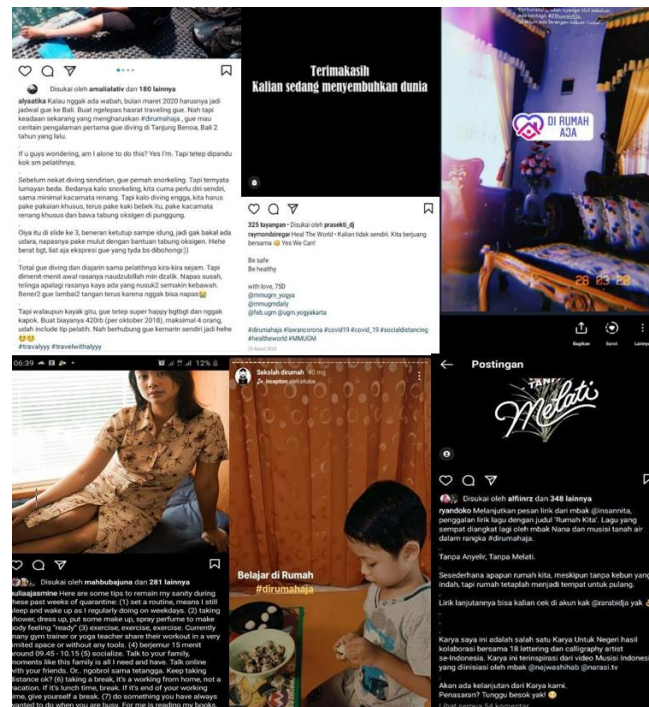


Figure 4. Instagram account screenshots with the hashtag #Dirumahaja

Following the study methodology, observations and interviews were conducted with four selected respondents. These respondents were chosen based on predetermined characteristics: all had Instagram accounts under their real names and had posted content using the hashtag #dirumahaja in March 2020. Due to geographical differences and ongoing social distancing guidelines, interviews were conducted online. A limitation of this study is that, out of the eight initially identified respondents, only four agreed to participate in the interviews. The findings are detailed as follows:

### Attention

Attention refers to the respondents' awareness of content associated with the hashtag #dirumahaja and their understanding of its purpose.

- **@ryandoko** described #dirumahaja as "a hashtag that encourages Indonesians to stay home during the pandemic to reduce the spread of COVID-19."
- **@galuhgita** stated it means "activities usually conducted outside should, as much as possible, be done at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic."
- **@prasekti\_dj** interpreted #dirumahaja as "more than just a hashtag or persuasive call to stay home during the pandemic. It represents self-awareness and care for loved ones, emphasizing that staying home is an act of safety and productivity."

The hashtag #dirumahaja serves as a campaign message on Instagram to promote staying at home during the pandemic. It aligns with physical distancing and social distancing initiatives while emphasizing that many productive activities can still be done at home.

### *Interest*

interest refers to the level of engagement respondents have with content related to the hashtag.

- **@ryandoko** was drawn to lettering tutorials and used this interest to inspire others through engaging activities at home.
- **@galuhgita** found cooking content appealing and used it as a learning activity for her child during school closures.
- **@zii\_uzzi** sought content that alleviated boredom at home.
- **@prasekti\_dj** was interested in updates on COVID-19 cases, finding motivation in staying informed and advocating preventive measures.

Each respondent's interest highlights the diverse ways individuals engage with content during the pandemic.

### *Search*

The Search phase involves seeking additional information based on interest.

- **@ryandoko** explored lettering techniques and tutorials.
- **@prasekti\_dj** actively sought updates on COVID-19 case numbers globally and in Indonesia.
- **@galuhgita** searched for cooking recipes to try at home, making it a collaborative activity with her child.

This phase demonstrates how curiosity prompts respondents to seek further resources to satisfy their interests.

### *Action*

Action describes respondents' activities after gathering information from the search phase.

- **@ryandoko** collaborated on a lettering project featuring lyrics from a song by Najwa Shihab, promoting the stay-at-home campaign.
- **@galuhgita** applied cooking recipes she discovered, engaging her child in home-based learning activities.
- **@zii\_uzzi** tried new recipes to create a productive atmosphere at home.
- **@prasekti\_dj** shared posts reflecting on the importance of staying home, tying it to his role as a government worker advocating public health measures.

All respondents demonstrated actions inspired by their interests, contributing to the campaign's dissemination through their activities.

### *Share*

Share refers to the dissemination of personal experiences or content to broader audiences.

Each respondent posted content using #dirumahaja, whether on Instagram feeds or stories. For example:

- **@ryandoko** shared a collaborative lettering artwork inspired by the stay-at-home message.

- @prasekti\_dj posted content that reflected his role as a civil servant, promoting adherence to pandemic safety measures.
- @zii\_uzzi shared captions encouraging others to stay home while expressing her longing for normal activities like traveling.

This sharing phase embodies the essence of the AISAS model, creating word-of-mouth and viral effects that amplify the campaign's persuasive message.

The findings demonstrate that each phase of AISAS—Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share—was effectively engaged, promoting the #dirumahaja message and encouraging behavior aligned with pandemic guidelines.

From the interviews conducted with each respondent, it was concluded that the account owners were aware of the hashtag #dirumahaja and could articulate its meaning. Moreover, they agreed with the function of the hashtag and contributed by posting content that included calls to action or inspiration for activities that could be done at home to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

For instance, @ryandoko collaborated with other lettering artists to create artwork inspired by song lyrics performed by Najwa Shihab, emphasizing the stay-at-home campaign. Similarly, @prasekti\_dj, a civil servant, used his role to promote compliance with government regulations aimed at reducing virus transmission.

It can be concluded that the respondents actively supported the stay-at-home movement through the content they created. The hashtag #dirumahaja can be likened to a virtual room where individuals collectively discuss a shared topic. The power of word-of-mouth, expressed through content disseminated on social media platforms like Instagram, demonstrates an effective strategy for viral communication. This finding highlights the potential of social media hashtags as tools for amplifying messages and encouraging widespread participation in social campaigns.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

Based on the results of this study, AISAS theory is proven to be relevant in explaining the process and flow of how the hashtag #dirumahaja functions to convey its message to the audience. Among the stages of AISAS—Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share—the Share stage plays the most critical role in spreading the message of the #dirumahaja campaign. Sharing content creates word-of-mouth momentum, leading to virality and persuasive effects, which encourage audiences to comply with the campaign's recommendations.

In this context, being "persuaded" means generating strong engagement with the audience. The hashtag #dirumahaja serves as a call-to-action for Indonesians to stay home and perform activities at home, thereby helping reduce the spread of COVID-19. Hashtag engagement is an important metric for measuring the effectiveness of communication campaigns. By embedding hashtags into a communication message, audiences are implicitly encouraged to participate in the intended movement.

The more aligned the content is with the audience's interests, the more likely they are to engage and replicate the behavior. A hashtag with high levels of interaction or widespread usage indicates that the associated content is

compelling, increasing its likelihood of being liked, shared, and spread further. Additionally, the number of comments on a post reflects its success and impact, as commenting requires users to take time to express their opinions. Likes and comments have been widely used as measures of the impact of social media content.

In addressing the research question—how the flow of #dirumahaja content disseminates messages to the public—the study found that Instagram users observe posts (photos, videos, or texts), respond by liking or commenting (representing Attention), and demonstrate interest (Interest) through their reactions. This interest often leads to further actions, such as searching for related content or trying out the ideas, as observed in the cases of @galuhgita and @uzii\_uzzi, who searched for cooking recipes and engaged in cooking activities. These steps align with the Search and Action stages.

Finally, users upload their activities to Instagram, embedding the #dirumahaja hashtag, thus entering the Share stage. This sharing not only spreads the message but also generates interactions and motivates others to adopt similar behaviors. As humans naturally mimic influential behavior, the process becomes self-reinforcing.

For example, @ryandoko, inspired by a song performed by Najwa Shihab, collaborated with other lettering artists to create an artwork based on the song lyrics, promoting the campaign. Similarly, @prasekti\_dj, a government employee, actively supported and promoted the stay-at-home campaign as part of his professional responsibilities.

In conclusion, AISAS theory effectively explains the behavioral flow triggered by the #dirumahaja hashtag, highlighting its significant role in creating persuasive, engaging, and impactful social campaigns.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

Still conducting further research to gain deeper insights into Analysis of #Dirumahaja Hashtags on Instagram Accounts in Persuading People to Stay at Home During the Covid-19 Pandemic in March 2020

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