



The Role of Communication Technology in Building Social Interaction and Increasing Digital Literacy in Ibu Sibuk Community

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation involves deep changes in businesses and organizations, with maximizing changes and opportunities in technology and social impact as top priorities. Further research was conducted to analyze the effects of digital transformation on communication in communities and identify effective strategies to overcome communication breakdowns arising from technological change. This research discusses the important role of communication technology in a community, namely the IbuSibuk community. The method used is a case study, with the data collection technique being structured interviews. The results showed that the use of communication technology has a significant role in facilitating social interaction, information exchange, and the self-development of members in the IbuSibuk Community. Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Telegram allow members to share information, ideas, and support, while identity as a member of IbuSibuk provides additional benefits, such as the opportunity to collaborate with brands or companies. There are some technical barriers and a lack of digital literacy that affect the use of technology in the community. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve digital literacy so that all members can utilize technology effectively and participate actively in the community. Improving digital literacy includes aspects of digital ethics, digital culture, and digital safety. Support and education on the use of technology can be organized through external initiatives as well as internal activities within the IbuSibuk community

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on communities in Indonesia with restrictions and bans on meetings, causing many activities to be postponed or canceled. However, with the decline of COVID-19 cases, online activities within communities have increased as an alternative during the pandemic. More than half of Indonesians (52.30%) are active in Facebook groups, and surveys show that 95% of respondents provide moral and material support to online community members. Online communities in Indonesia have experienced growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, with members feeling more comfortable and safe in expressing their opinions and feelings online (Hutchinson, 2021).

Community generally refers to a group of people in a specific geographical area who interact within a common institution and share a sense of interdependence and common belonging (Outhwaite in Szakács-Behling, 2010). Community is not related to structure, but to a state of mind, consciousness or sense of solidarity. According to Prawiro (2018), a community is a group consisting of several individuals who interact with each other in a certain environment. Members who are members of this group usually have something in common, for example: interests, profession, place of residence, interests, religion, and social and economic conditions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way communities communicate. But in this pandemic era, such communication cannot be done effectively. Communication in the community began to shift using available technology, namely mobile phones with the existence of social media. Digital transformation involves deep changes in businesses and organizations by maximizing changes and opportunities in technology and social impact as a top priority. The implementation of technology-enhanced learning methods requires the right IT infrastructure and platform. Thus, digital transformation involves multifaceted changes from human resources, processes, strategies, structures,

and technology adoption to improve performance (Siswanto, 2022).

Juditha (2020) states that the existence of information and communication technology at this time has changed the pattern and way of communicating with society. This makes the formation of indirect interactions between senders and recipients of messages, the use of messages, or emoticons. Changes in communication patterns can cause communication interference or noise, which is one of the eight communication components that affect the ability to receive, send, process, and understand messages. It can be caused by differences in perception, inappropriate use of punctuation, incorrect capitalization, differences in reading intonation, and the absence of non-verbal communication components such as body movements, facial expressions, and eye movements. In communities, these problems often arise between community administrators, administrators with members, and members with members.

This paper highlights a growing community in Indonesia, the IbuSibuk by Orami community. IbuSibuk is a community that connects brands with moms who are influencers or commonly referred to as momfluencers to collaborate in several activities sponsored by brands. Members of the IbuSibuk community are mothers who want to learn or are already influencers on social media such as Instagram and TikTok. More than 70,000 women in Indonesia have registered as members in IbuSibuk. IbuSibuk members are members of several groups on Whatsapp and Telegram for different activities.

Researchers conducted an initial interview with IbuSibuk's administrator, W (22 years old, 2023). Before the pandemic, IbuSibuk held seminars and workshops directly or face-to-face approximately once a month. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IbuSibuk activities are carried out online, namely through the Zoom application. Currently, IbuSibuk is holding an activity called IbuSibuk Academy Batch 3 and there is a Telegram group for members who participate in this activity, totaling 1600 people. Communication that runs quite well with the admins who regulate the order of the

group, but several times there are problems that occur between members due to differences in reading intonation and the absence of non-verbal communication.

Communication problems that occur in the focused group of the general group of the IbuSibuk community can cause even bigger problems. Not only internally, but it can also have a wider impact. Moreover, members of the IbuSibuk community are momfluencers who can have an impact on their followers on social media. Therefore, this research raises how the communication patterns in IbuSibuk use existing communication technology.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach to understand the communication patterns formed through technology in the IbuSibuk Community. The qualitative approach allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and interactions of mothers in the community. The research design used in this research is a case study. The researcher chose a case study, because this research focused on a specific community, namely the IbuSibuk community.

The research informants in this study are two members of the IbuSibuk Community who are active in using communication technology, such as online chat groups, and are attached in Table 1. Participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique with inclusion criteria as mothers who have an active role in the community and use communication technology to interact.

In collecting data, we conducted structured interviews with research participants to gain an in-

depth understanding of the communication patterns formed through technology in the IbuSibuk Community. The interviews were conducted through a mutually agreed-upon online communication platform. The interview questions were developed based on the research objectives and covered topics such as the use of communication technology, interaction patterns, benefits, and challenges in communication through technology.

Data analysis was conducted through a thematic approach. The steps to be taken in the data analysis process are as follows:

1. Interview Transcription: Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim to facilitate analysis.
2. Data Processing: Screenshots of group conversations will be collected and categorized based on emerging themes or topics.
3. Data Coding: Data from interviews and screenshots will be coded according to the themes or categories that emerge from the analysis.
4. Theme Development: The themes that emerge from the data coding will be identified and developed into communication patterns formed through technology in the IbuSibuk Community.
5. Interpretation and Presentation of Results: Findings will be interpreted and presented in the form of an in-depth narrative using relevant quotes from interviews and screenshots.

Table 1. List of Informants

Details	Source		
	N1	N2	N3
Gender	female	female	female
Age	32	27	25
City	Semarang	Palembang	Yogyakarta
Status	Member of IbuSibuk	Member of IbuSibuk	Administrator of IbuSibuk

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication in Ibu Sibuk Community

Broadly speaking, informants N1 and N2 as members of the IbuSibuk community revealed the use of platforms such as Instagram, Telegram groups, and private WhatsApp messages to get information about activities and interact with other members. Based on this research, it can be seen that the use of technology in communication plays an important role in the IbuSibuk community. The choice of communication platform as the main channel of the IbuSibuk community follows the media selection theory. The board chose Telegram because it has a larger capacity and has features such as special channels that allow more effective and efficient communication for members.

In communication theory, the relevant communication models are one-way and two-way communication models. The use of technology in communication within the IbuSibuk community enables two-way communication between members. Members can share information, ideas, and support through these platforms. In addition, communication also includes interaction with community administrators, such as in classes or other activities.

In communication theory, there are two communication models that are relevant in the context of the IbuSibuk community. First, a one-way communication model that describes the transmission of information from one party to another without any direct feedback. In the IbuSibuk community, the use of technology such as Instagram, Telegram groups, and private WhatsApp messages allows members to receive information from community administrators or other members. Second, the two-way communication model allows direct interaction between community members. Members can share information, ideas, and support through these platforms, thus creating interconnectedness and collaboration in achieving common goals.

Informants N1 and N2 stated that they use the platforms to share information about activities and interact with other members. This indicates that communication in the IbuSibuk community is not

only limited to sending information in one direction, but also involves responses and interactions from other members.

One theory that can be relevant in this example is two-way communication theory. According to Kurniawan (2018), two-way communication theory emphasizes the importance of feedback and interaction between the sender and receiver of the message. In the IbuSibuk community, the use of technology allows members to respond and interact directly, which is in accordance with the principles of two-way communication theory.

In this context, identity as a member of IbuSibuk provides additional benefits, such as the opportunity to work with a particular brand or company. This identity strengthens members' attachment to the community and provides benefits for those involved. Healthy competition and mutual support between members in the IbuSibuk community demonstrate cooperation and competition theory (Nugroho & Stoffers, 2020). Although there is competition between members, they still support each other within the community.

In addition, emotional attachment is also an important aspect of the IbuSibuk community. Supportive communication creates emotional attachments between community members. This makes members feel connected to other members and motivates them to remain in the community. In interpersonal communication theory, the importance of social support and emotional attachment in human relationships is emphasized.

In terms of shared goals, both informant N1 and informant N2 mentioned that shared goals are an important factor in joining the community. Members join in the hope of gaining support, developing themselves, and achieving material benefits. In the context of community administrators (informant N3), communicative and responsive leadership is an important factor. Community administrators were described as people who embrace housewives and have good communication skills. They are also patient in the face of criticism, gossip, or negative comments concerning the IbuSibuk community, but remain firm in carrying out their duties as

administrators. Overall, the use of technology in communication within the IbuSibuk community plays an important role in supporting social interaction, emotional attachment, and the achievement of common goals.

The use of digital communication platforms and technologies has expanded the scope of communication. Member engagement in the community believes their contribution is essential to social relations, engaging in a participatory culture through content creation and online activities. This engagement supports the transition of offline interactions to new media-supported activities in the community (Epranata & Bangun, 2022). The use of communication technologies in the IbuSibuk community, such as Instagram, Telegram groups, and WhatsApp messages, has an important role in supporting social interaction, emotional attachment, and achieving shared goals. The use of communication platforms was chosen based on media selection theory, with Telegram chosen because it has a larger capacity and features that enable effective and efficient communication. In the IbuSibuk community, communication takes place in two directions, allowing members to share information, ideas, and advice with each other.

The Use of Technology in Community Communication

The results of the interview with informant N1 show that technology plays an important role in facilitating communication and interaction within the IbuSibuk Community. Informant N1 started using technology by making videos about the complementary food menu for her child, which eventually led her to learn about the IbuSibuk Community. This shows that communication technologies that are rich in information and functions can facilitate better interactions (Soerono, et al., 2019). In this case, the Instagram platform that displays advertising recommendations related to the IbuSibuk Community acts as a medium rich in information and functions, thus facilitating communication and introducing informants to the community.

Meanwhile, informant N2 revealed obstacles faced in using the Orami application, such as the problem of the website taking a long time to open (Loading time) and difficulty accessing the application. This indicates that there are technical problems in the use of technology that can hinder communication and the participation of community members. Soerono, Tjahjono, & Sutjipto (2019) stated that if the technology used is not rich in information and functions, such as the Orami application that experiences loading problems, then the ability to communicate and interact in the community can be limited.

Informant N1 also felt the positive impact of technology through self-development classes provided by the IbuSibuk Community. She first attended the Tiktok Masterclass, which motivated her to make videos and improve her skills. In this case, informant N1 uses technology to develop skills and gain recognition from the community, which fulfills her self-development and social affiliation needs.

In the context of IbuSibuk Community, informant N3 (as the community administrator) explained that members use various technology platforms such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom, and Google Meet as the main communication tools. They choose and use these media because they provide convenience, speed, and efficiency in communicating and organizing activities.

The role of technology in facilitating communication between community members can be seen in the results of interviews with informant N1 and informant N2. Informant N1 mentioned the use of social media and apps to campaign and share information between members. Informant N2 also mentioned the use of the Orami application in providing information in the community. According to computer-mediated communication theory, communication technology can facilitate interaction and information exchange between geographically separated individuals (Apriliani, 2020). In this case, the applications and social media used by the IbuSibuk community act as CMC tools that facilitate

communication and information sharing between members.

Digital literacy is needed for the use of technology in communication within the IbuSibuk community. Digital literacy includes the understanding, skills, and abilities of individuals to use digital technology (Syah, Darmawan, & Purnawan, 2019). In the IbuSibuk Community, there are several members who still have difficulty using applications such as Zoom or Telegram. Although explanations have been given verbally, as well as in the form of videos, there are still many members who do not understand. This shows a lack of digital literacy among community members. To increase the participation and involvement of all members, it is important to provide support and education on the use of technology so that they can be more active and involved in the community.

Digital Literacy in Ibu Sibuk Community

The existence of the IbuSibuk community in cyberspace has demonstrated the benefits of digital media in fostering interactions between users who are offline-restricted. But on the other hand, it has been seen that there are members of the community who still have difficulty using Zoom or Telegram. This shows the lack of digital literacy possessed by members of the community.

Rianto (2019) states that digital literacy is related to the use of digital technology in human life. Digital literacy is also seen as a person's ability to understand and use information sourced from digital media (Sahidillah & Miftahurrisqi, 2019). UNESCO also views digital literacy as an important human foundation for the ability to use information and communication technology (Ginting, Arindani, Lubis, & Shella, 2022).

In digital literacy, it does not only look at the aspect of using digital communication and information tools. Rather, it is the ability to think critically and one's sensitivity to various issues of socio-cultural phenomena that exist (Rahmawan, Mahameruaji, & Anisa, 2019). Users' lack of ability to operate the technology they use can affect their ability to analyze the information that will be received. This is because in digital literacy, aspects

of cognitive ability play an important role in assessing a person's literacy skills (Ahmad, 2022).

In this situation, it is necessary to increase digital literacy skills as a basic pillar for someone to enter the digital world. This is also a provision for someone to strengthen other digital literacy pillars, such as digital ethics, digital culture, and digital security. In an effort to develop digital literacy skills, this can be done through digital media education activities (Pradana, 2018).

This education can be done through various activities, either by participating in digital literacy activities from the Ministry of Communication and Information of the Republic of Indonesia, Siberkreasi, or even through internal activities from the IbuSibuk community. This needs to be done and is quite important, because activities in the community are not only carried out offline. But it is also done online through the use of digital communication and information technology.

This ability is important for everyone, especially members of the IbuSibuk community. This is because to enter and participate in the modern world, good digital literacy skills are needed (Sutrisna, 2020). This ability is also useful for every digital media user to be able to filter the information they consume, so that they can avoid hoax information and protect themselves from being trapped in the crimes of the digital world.

The presence of the IbuSibuk community in cyberspace has shown the positive effects of digital media in building interactions between users who are constrained by offline distance. However, there are members of the community who still have difficulty using platforms such as Zoom or Telegram, indicating a lack of digital literacy among community members. This shows that the more users are involved and accustomed to using technology, the more likely the technology will be used in the long term in a community (Utomo et al., 2021).

Digital literacy is a person's ability to understand and use information sourced from digital media. In addition to the use of communication tools and digital information, digital literacy also includes the ability to think critically and sensitivity to

existing socio-cultural issues. Users' lack of ability to operate technology can affect their ability to analyze the information received.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the important role of technology in communication within the IbuSibuk community. Community members use platforms such as Instagram, Telegram groups, and private WhatsApp messages to get information about activities and interact with other members. The use of these technologies enables two-way communication between members, where they can share information, ideas, and support with each other in the community.

In conclusion, the use of communication technology in the IbuSibuk Community plays an important role in facilitating social interaction, information exchange, and the self-development of members. Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Telegram allow members to share information, ideas, and support with each other, while identity as a member of IbuSibuk provides additional benefits such as opportunities to work with brands or companies. However, technical barriers and a lack of digital literacy are obstacles to the utilization of these technologies. Therefore, efforts need to be made to improve digital literacy so that all members can utilize the technology effectively and participate actively in the community.

Improving digital literacy in the community can include aspects of digital ethics, digital culture, and digital security. Support and education on the use of technology are needed so that members can understand and use information sourced from digital media properly. Digital media education can be organized through external initiatives or internal activities within the IbuSibuk community. With improved digital literacy, community members can filter the information they consume, analyze information better, and maintain personal safety in the digital world. Digital literacy skills are key to facing an increasingly digitally connected modern world

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