

## COVID 19: ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND NEWS IN THE SOCIETY

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### **Kata kunci**

Covid 19, Akses  
Informasi, Masyarakat

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana penggunaan akses informasi masyarakat dalam pemberitaan Covid-19. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan ialah kuantitatif dengan menggunakan desain cross sectional. Penelitian dilakukan pada tahun 2022 di salah satu yayasan tahfidz dan pengajian muqim khusus perempuan di wilayah Medan. Jumlah sampel berjumlah 40 orang dengan rentang usia 20 tahun sampai 80 tahun. Metode pengumpulan data dengan cara wawancara kepada responden. Hasil penelitian didapatkan bahwa 1) Media sosial (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tiktok) merupakan media alternatif pertama yang paling banyak menjadi pilihan responden dalam mengakses informasi awal, terkait Covid-19; 2) Mayoritas responden berdasarkan lama waktu dalam mengakses informasi atau pemberitaan terkait Covid-19 dalam satu hari (satuan jam) dengan durasi rata-rata < 1 jam; 3) Mayoritas responden mengalami perubahan perilaku akibat pemberitaan media massa terkait Covid-19 berupa mengadopsi gaya hidup sehat dan higienis; 4) Mayoritas responden, menyatakan bahwa "mampu membayangkan realita berdasarkan berita yang ada, namun tidak mengetahui pasti kondisi yang sebenarnya terjadi" terkait pemberitaan Covid-19 di media massa; 5) Informasi yang paling banyak dibutuhkan atau paling sering di cari responden terkait Covid-19 ialah informasi tentang pencegahan Covid-19.

### **Keywords**

Covid 19, Acces  
Information, Society

### **Abstract**

This study aims to find out how to use public access to information in reporting on Covid-19. The type of research used is quantitative using a cross sectional design. The research was conducted in 2022 at one of the tahfidz foundations and special muqim recitations for women in the Medan area. The number of samples was 40 people with an age range of 20 years to 80 years. The method of data collection is by interviewing the respondents. The results of the study showed that 1) Social media (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tiktok) was the first alternative media that was the most preferred by respondents in accessing initial information, related to Covid-19; 2) The majority of respondents based on the length of time in accessing information or news related to Covid-19 in one day (units of hours) with an average duration of < 1 hour; 3) The majority of respondents experienced changes in behavior due to mass media coverage related to Covid-19 in the form of adopting a healthy and hygienic lifestyle; 4) The majority of respondents stated that they were "able to imagine reality based on the existing news, but did not know for sure the actual conditions" related to the news of Covid-19 in the mass media; 5) The information most needed or most frequently sought by respondents related to Covid-19 is information about the prevention of Covid-19.

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## Introduction

One of the government policies related to controlling Covid-19 is to disseminate information as widely as possible to the public regarding Covid-19. The media have a big role in disseminating various kinds of information to the public. Information or news about Covid-19 is information that the public wants to know, both in print media, electronic media and online media recently. Cases of Covid-19 disease are new cases that have resulted in outbreaks or pandemics throughout the world, causing a very high level of public curiosity about the disease. The Covid-19 pandemic has attracted the attention of countries around the world, even almost every time the media always reports the latest information related to Covid-19, one of which is information that is to provide education to the public about how to deal with the new normal during the current pandemic (Blasco, 2020 ).

The very fast transmission of the Covid-19 virus in the community, and also supported by the rapid spread of information about Covid-19 through social media can result in panic in the wider community. The use of social media as an alternative option in accessing various information has both positive and negative impacts. One of the negative impacts of the rapid dissemination of information will lead to various kinds of reactions for the public, these reactions can be in the form of panic, anxiety or fear so that if not handled wisely it will be fatal. Based on the panic, fear, and anxiety of the community, it will cause a negative behavior as well (Zulya, 2020). Meanwhile, as a positive impact of social media in disseminating information related to Covid-19 in terms of benefits to the government, is the effectiveness of social media as a medium to convey various information about its policies, besides that social media is a means for health experts in providing education. to the public about information, and ways to prevent Covid-19 (Fernandes-Torres, 2021).

Based on data on trends in internet and social media usage in Indonesia in 2020 from the total population (population) throughout Indonesia, which is around 272.1 million people, there are 338.2 million mobile unit users, 175 million internet users, and 160 million users. active social media (up 10% or about 10 from 2019). Therefore, this study aims to find out how the use of public information access in reporting Covid-19.

## Method

This research is a quantitative research using a cross sectional design. The research was conducted in 2022 at one of the tahfidz foundations and special muqim recitations for women in the Medan area. The number of samples was 40 people with an age range of 20 years to 80 years. The method of data collection is by interviewing the respondents.

## Result

The following is a table detailing the characteristics of respondents in these community service activities.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents**

Variabel	n	%
<b>Ages</b>		
20-30	6	15.0
30-40	4	10.0

40-50	17	42.5
50-60	10	25.0
60-70	2	5.0
70-80	1	2.5
<b>Total</b>	40	100
<b>Education</b>		
Primary School	1	2.5
Junior High School	2	5.0
Senior High School	17	42.5
University	20	50.0
<b>Total</b>	40	100
<b>Occupation</b>		
Housewife	31	77.5
Entrepreneur	2	5.0
Private employees	1	2.5
Teacher	5	12.5
Student	1	2.5
<b>Total</b>	40	100

Table 1 shows that in the age variable, the majority of respondents have an age group of 40-50 years of 42.5%. In the education variable, it was found that the majority of respondents studied up to university by 50%. In the work variable, the majority of respondents are dominated by housewives at 77.5%.

### 1. Research results related to respondents' access to information on Covid-19 news

**Table. 2 The first alternative media that is the most preferred by respondents in accessing initial information, related to Covid-19**

	n	%
<b>What media did you first choose to access initial information about Covid-19?</b>		
Chat Apps (WhatsApp, Telegram, BiP. Line, WeChat, Hangouts)	6	15.0
Online media (Website berita/portal berita)	4	10.0
Social media (Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Tiktok)	19	47.5
News Aggregator (Line today, BaBe, GoNews)	1	2.5
Government official website (Covid19.go.id, PeduliLindungi, Situs WHO)	2	5.0
Television	8	20.0
<b>Total</b>	40	100

From table 2, it can be seen that social media (Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Tiktok) is the first alternative media that is the most chosen by respondents in the process of searching for early information about Covid-19 with a percentage of 47.5%.

**Table 3. The length of time respondents access information or news related to Covid-19 in one day (units of hours).**

<b>How long do you access information or news related to Covid-19 in one day (hours)?</b>	n	%
<1 hour	37	92.5
1-2 hours	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	40	100.0

In table 3 it can be seen that the majority of respondents access information or news related to Covid-19 in one day (units of hours) with an average duration of < 1 hour by 92.5%.

**Table 4. Changes in respondent behavior due to mass media coverage of Covid-19**

<b>The mass media coverage of Covid-19 made me experience? (changes in behavior)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Be careful and believe that all because of a test from Allah SWT	1	2.5
Spend more time at home	1	2.5
Buy things as needed, life is simpler	1	2.5
Adopt a healthy and hygienic lifestyle	22	55.0
Rely on digital technology (online) in their daily activities as an effort to avoid direct contact	5	12.5
No behavior change	10	25.0
Total	40	100

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents experienced changes in behavior due to mass media coverage related to Covid-19 in the form of adopting a healthy and hygienic lifestyle, with a percentage of 55%.

**Table 5. Respondents' opinions about the Covid-19 news in the mass media**

<b>What do you think about the Covid-19 news reported in the mass media?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Being able to imagine reality based on the news, but not knowing for sure what actually happened.	14	35.0
The media is only exaggerating Covid-19	5	12.5
Media coverage is a true picture of reality	3	7.5
The media coverage makes us tired	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

ority of respondents, 35% of respondents stated that they were "able to imagine reality based on the existing news, but did not know for sure the actual conditions that occurred" regarding the news of Covid-19 in the mass media..

**Table 6. Information related to Covid-19 is most needed or sought by respondents**

<b>In assessing information related to Covid-19, what information do you need or seek most often?</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Number of cases	5	12.5
Medicine	2	5.0
Handling	8	20.0
Prevention	16	40.0
Deployment	1	2.5
There isn't any	1	2.5
Vaccine	6	15.0
Red zone	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0

In table 6 it can be seen that the majority of respondents are looking for the most needed information related to Covid-19, which is about Covid-19 prevention information with a percentage of 40%.

## Discussion

According to Azwar S (2011) the impact of reporting on the mass media is one of the factors that can influence a person's attitude, in delivering information or reporting in the mass media, news that should be factual delivered objectively will affect a person's attitude. Instagram users continue to grow every year, in 2020 of the total population of Indonesia, 79% of the population is recorded as Instagram users (We Are Social, 2020). Since the end of 2020 Instagram has also issued a new feature to combat misinformation about Covid-19 with this new feature, users in areas with a spike in Covid-19 cases will see a link to the local health authority and at the top of each user's feed can also seek information about vaccines directed to trusted health sources (The Verge, 2020).

The existence of the internet, which has a fairly high penetration, has led the Indonesian people to be more fond of various information or content presented on digital media (online) so that people began to leave print media such as newspapers, tabloids or magazines (Romadhoni, 2018). Based on the results of the Nielsen Consumer Media View survey in 2017 from 11 cities in Indonesia, the penetration of print media in the form of newspapers and magazines is still in the 2nd lowest position with a penetration of 7% and 3% respectively, this is very far when compared to the Internet which reached 44% (Romadhoni, 2018). The low penetration and decreased interest in reading for print media can occur because it is supported by the birth of a digital native generation who was born in the era of technological development with digital devices and smartphones as the main tool for surfing various information around the world, this causes the digital native generation to rarely obtain information from print media such as newspapers and tabloids (Romadhoni, 2018).

The more often people are exposed to information on an ongoing basis, there will be great opportunities that affect the behavior of these people, therefore it is necessary to consider information about Covid-19 on the behavioral response of the population regarding health interventions to the community and the flow of communication (Matteo, 2020). From the results of the research above, it was also found that the majority of respondents experienced changes in behavior due to mass media coverage related to Covid-19 in the form of adopting a healthy and hygienic lifestyle. This is certainly something that is encouraging for health promoters, that education through mass media coverage is able to change people to behave healthier.

The initial period of the emergence of new cases of Covid-19, triggered a number of diverse opinions from the entire world population, including Indonesia. The Covid-19 pandemic indicates the emergence of various kinds of responses that lead to pro and contra behavior. Some people adopt an anticipatory attitude so as not to contract the Covid-19 virus by adopting a healthy lifestyle, carrying out the 3M movement (wearing masks, washing hands, and maintaining distance). People's behavior against the Covid-19 virus encourages people to have an indifferent nature and seem to underestimate or even make it a joke. Indifference is not only present among ordinary people, even many officials or politicians underestimate this virus by not preparing or anticipating the emergence of this epidemic in Indonesia. Even when the rapid spread of Covid-19 between regions and across countries and forms of anticipation by several countries by closing access to and from their countries, the government and citizens of Indonesia still seem relaxed and do not take preventive measures against this virus.

In fact, the number of people who are against and have a behavior that is less concerned about the emergence of the Covid-19 virus is less than those who care about breaking the chain of spreading the Covid-19 virus. However, the impact of this unconcerned behavior has resulted in an increasing number of new Covid-19 cases. Those who belong to this group are people who think they are immune from infection with the Covid-19 virus and think that science is not always right (Ghaemi, 2020).

From the results of this study, it was found that the majority of respondents were looking for the most needed information related to Covid-19, which was about Covid-19 prevention information. The majority of respondents argued that they were "able to imagine reality based on the existing news, but did not know for sure the actual conditions" related to the news of Covid-19 in the mass media. The average respondent is also looking for news related to prevention or information about Covid-19

with a duration of reading news under 1 hour per day. The emergency situation due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has an impact on the emergence of uncertainty and confusion in the community and causes stressors for a number of people. Uncertainty arises because the public does not know when the outbreak will end soon, so this has led many groups of people to search for information or news related to Covid-19 in an effort to get certainty and anticipatory attitudes so as not to contract the Covid-19 virus (Taylor, 2019).

## **Conclusion**

1) Social media (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tiktok) is the first alternative media that is the most preferred by respondents in accessing initial information, related to Covid-19; 2) The majority of respondents based on the length of time in accessing information or news related to Covid-19 in one day (units of hours) with an average duration of < 1 hour; 3) The majority of respondents experienced changes in behavior due to mass media coverage related to Covid-19 in the form of adopting a healthy and hygienic lifestyle; 4) The majority of respondents stated that they were "able to imagine reality based on the existing news, but did not know for sure the actual conditions" related to the news of Covid-19 in the mass media; 5) The information that is most needed or most frequently sought by respondents related to Covid-19 is information about the prevention of Covid-19. It is recommended for the government to continue to strengthen information regarding Covid-19 by utilizing social media, especially regarding the prevention of Covid-19 and confirming the truth regarding information or hoax news that is currently circulating.

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