
INSTAGRAM'S IMPACT ON BEHAVIOUR IN THE BUNGKU TENGAH COASTAL COMMUNITY OF MOROWALI

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the process of behavioral change among the coastal community in Bungku Tengah Sub-district, Morowali Regency, concerning the use of the social media platform Instagram. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach grounded in Rogers' Adoption Theory, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving five informants selected purposively from active Instagram users aged 18-25 within the community. Data analysis involved data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The findings indicate that Instagram use has driven significant behavioral changes influenced by five adoption factors: Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption, with awareness of Instagram's benefits being the most dominant factor. These changes manifested in various aspects, including altered perspectives on accessing global information and education, local economic development through product promotion (such as seafood catches) and tourism, preservation of local culture, and maintenance of social connections. Although challenges like the digital divide exist, the overall adoption of Instagram is considered to have had a positive impact, transforming the platform into an essential tool for interaction, business, cultural preservation, and environmental awareness within the Bungku Tengah coastal community.

Keywords: Behavioral Change, Coastal Community, Instagram

INTRODUCTION

Humans are inherently social beings who thrive within environments rich with interaction. In the contemporary era, communication technology has become a cornerstone for information dissemination and self-expression. Communication serves as a vital tool for exchanging opinions within a given environment, propelling society into an increasingly sophisticated digital age that offers unparalleled ease and practicality year after year (Andre, 2019).

According to Burhan Bungin, as cited by Febriadi (2013), the rapid advancement of information technology has fundamentally reshaped societal patterns and structures. This technological progress has led to significant transformations in daily life. The widespread adoption of social media has subtly altered behavioral patterns and personalities, inducing gradual shifts in culture, ethics, attitudes, and established societal norms. Given Indonesia's large and diverse population, characterized by a multitude of cultures, customs, ethnicities, races, and beliefs, the nation is highly susceptible to profound socio-cultural changes.

Cahyono (2016) defines social media as an online platform that facilitates effortless communication and relationship building among users through various applications, including blogs, social networks, Wikipedia, discussion forums, and virtual worlds. The emergence and proliferation of these virtual environments as interactive platforms have profoundly altered people's social interaction habits. The rise of social networking sites and communication platforms like Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook has provided users with avenues to

disseminate information, communicate, seek entertainment, and establish their presence (Febriadi, 2019).

The current pervasive use of social media, particularly Instagram, has become almost addictive for many Indonesians. From residents in major cities to those in remote areas, there is a widespread embrace of Instagram within their communities. It is undeniable that contemporary society is closely associated with smartphones, which are often used almost twenty-four hours a day. This ubiquitous usage has had a multifaceted impact on various aspects of societal life. The advent of social media has significantly transformed communication methods. In coastal regions, this technological evolution has brought about substantial changes in the social and cultural lives of coastal communities, including their behaviors and interaction patterns.

With the expanding reach of internet penetration, coastal communities in Bungku Tengah District, Morowali Regency, have also experienced increased internet access and smartphone adoption. This surge has empowered Bungku Tengah's coastal residents to connect with the online world through social media platforms like Instagram. Given that Bungku Tengah's coastal communities often maintain connections with family and friends in distant locations due to work or trade activities, Instagram has become a crucial communication channel, allowing them to stay connected irrespective of geographical boundaries. The presence of Instagram has transformed traditional market practices; previously, products were exclusively sold in local markets, but now coastal communities in Bungku Tengah District can expand their businesses and access broader markets.

Furthermore, the coastal communities of Bungku Tengah possess a rich local culture and traditions. Instagram can serve as a powerful tool for preserving and promoting their cultural heritage, encompassing art, music, and local wisdom. They also utilize Instagram to seek information and entertainment.

The influence of social media applications like Instagram on community institutions has the potential to alter social life, including changes in norms, habits, and behavioral patterns among different societal groups. These changes can be both detrimental and beneficial. Positive social changes can lead to greater ease for communities in acquiring and disseminating information. The information obtained can yield advantages, both socially and financially. Conversely, the detrimental effects of social networks include the emergence of various social groups that mislead communities by invoking specific beliefs, ethnicities, or behavioral patterns that deviate from established societal values.

The author's interest in researching the use of Instagram and its impact on the behavioral changes of coastal communities in Bungku Tengah District stems from observing a noticeable shift in their behavior after the introduction of Instagram.

Van Dijk, as cited by Nasrullah (2015), posits that social media platforms prioritize user existence, facilitating their activities and collaborations. Consequently, social media can be viewed as an online medium (facilitator) that strengthens inter-user relationships and fosters social bonds.

Mahendra (2017) defines Instagram as a social media platform designed for users to share photos from their accounts. Instagram offers features for editing photos and saving them without the need to transfer them to a laptop. Additionally, Instagram is a social media platform specifically for posting photos and videos, allowing users to upload them directly without saving them to their galleries.

Broadly, behavior refers to the actions or response patterns displayed by an individual in a specific situation. An individual's behavior involves actions or responses reflecting the reciprocal

relationship between the individual and their environment, influenced by customs, attitudes, emotions, values, ethics, power, persuasion, or genetics. Social behavior is a type of behavior that occurs in social situations, encompassing how people think, feel, and act (Ramadhani, 2013).

Satria (2004) defines coastal communities as groups of people who live together in coastal areas, forming and possessing a distinct culture closely tied to their reliance on coastal resources. Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations Theory states that adoption is a mental process of deciding to accept or reject a new idea, further affirming the acceptance or rejection of that new idea.

Numerous studies have explored the use of Instagram and its impact on behavioral changes. For instance, Vira's (2021) study, "The Use of Instagram as a Communication Medium for Students of the Faculty of Social Sciences, State Islamic University of North Sumatra," found that Instagram is quite effective as a communication tool among students. According to most students, Instagram's advantages include its free access, appealing and user-friendly interface, and extensive filter options. The positive impacts of Instagram, as reported by most students, include gaining extensive insights and information from various fields worldwide, fostering creativity, and reconnecting with old friends while meeting new ones globally.

Another study by Andriani (2022), titled "The Impact of Instagram Social Media on the Religious Behavior of Al-Ikhsan Mosque Youth in Sumillan Village, Enrekang Regency," revealed a high level of Instagram usage among the youth of Al-Ikhsan Mosque in Sumillan Village, evident in their intensity of use, motivations, and utilization of the platform. The study identified both positive and negative impacts of Instagram on these young people: (1) Positive impacts: Instagram can support economic activities (e.g., online shops), serve as a platform for creative expression, and facilitate information dissemination. (2) Negative impacts: Instagram can lead to addiction, resulting in laziness, decreased study time, and excessive data consumption. Additionally, the presence of pornographic content and the spread of misinformation on Instagram have been linked to instances of sexual harassment and the manipulation of young users by false news.

Finally, Taufik's (2021) research, "Changes in Adolescent Social Behavior in Using Social Media in Patikarya Village, Bontisikuyu District, Selayar Islands Regency," highlighted several behavioral changes among adolescents due to social media use. These include reduced social interaction and a decline in traditional "hanging out" activities in Patikarya village. Adolescents also become more "up-to-date" and trend-conscious. Furthermore, curiosity often transforms into fascination and then addiction, leading to an increase in consumerist behavior. Reduced rest time is another consequence, as adolescents prioritize social media, often neglecting their health due to insufficient sleep.

What differentiates the current research is its focus on how Instagram influences behavioral changes across the entire coastal community, specifically individuals aged 18-25, in Bungku Tengah District, Morowali Regency.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method. As articulated by Miles and Huberman (2005), qualitative data analysis involves interactive and continuous activities until the data is thoroughly refined. The data analysis activities, as outlined by Sugiyono (2013), include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The subjects of this research were coastal community members in Bungku Tengah district who actively use Instagram in their daily lives. From this subject group, five informants were

selected using a purposive sampling technique. These informants were active Instagram users from the Bungku Tengah coastal community, aged between 18 and 25 years.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research align with Rogers' Adoption Theory (2003), as cited by Syarifudin (2009), which posits that individuals undergo a sequential process before adopting a new behavior. This process comprises five stages:

The initial stage, Awareness, refers to an individual becoming conscious of or gaining knowledge about a stimulus (Syarifudin, 2009). In the context of this study, Awareness relates to Instagram users' understanding of how they utilize the platform, its impact on their thoughts and emotions, and their awareness of privacy and security when interacting with content and other users. Increased awareness of Instagram empowers users to make more informed and judicious decisions in their platform usage, leading to more positive and beneficial online interactions. Based on research findings and observations, it is evident that Instagram users in coastal communities must enhance their self-awareness regarding how they access, communicate, consume, and share information on the platform. This heightened awareness necessitates an adjustment or modification of their attitudes to prevent them from becoming immersed or misled by inaccurate or negative information that could adversely affect their lives and behavior.

Interest signifies that an individual begins to develop an attraction to the stimulus (Syarifudin, 2009). In this research, Interest refers to the Bungku Tengah community's fascination with Instagram, often using the platform to showcase the distinct beauty of their beaches and seas. The community's interest in Instagram is driven by its suitability as a social networking application for sharing information, culture, and sentiments, including perspectives on the coastal area of Bungku Tengah.

The Evaluation stage involves an individual weighing the pros and cons of the stimulus for themselves, indicating an improved attitude (Syarifudin, 2009). In this study, Evaluation refers to the process by which the coastal community of Bungku Tengah leverages Instagram as a powerful tool in their daily lives. They have actively sought to understand the impacts and benefits of using the platform, while also considering its role in preserving their local values and culture. The research findings suggest that the adoption of Instagram has brought significant positive impacts to the coastal community of Bungku Tengah. They have successfully utilized the platform to share their rich cultural and natural heritage with the world, strengthen their community, and stimulate local economic growth. However, they remain attentive to time management and the information shared on Instagram. Furthermore, their evaluation indicates that Instagram is more than just a social media platform; it is a window that allows them to celebrate coastal life, connect with the outside world, and achieve positive economic outcomes. With pride in their culture, nature, and environmental consciousness, the coastal community of Bungku Tengah views Instagram as a valuable tool for fostering positive changes in interaction, business, and environmental stewardship. They eagerly anticipate further developments brought by this platform.

The Trial stage involves an individual beginning to experiment with the new behavior (Syarifudin, 2009). In this research, Trial represents the initial phase of the community's engagement with Instagram. The coastal community of Bungku Tengah approached Instagram with curiosity. Many were initially skeptical or unfamiliar with the concept of sharing photos and stories online. However, over time, this process evolved into an experience that influenced many aspects of their lives. Instagram has become an invaluable tool for maintaining and celebrating cultural identity, connecting them with the outside world, and even promoting local economic

growth. Despite initial doubts, they now perceive Instagram as a valuable asset in their lives for preserving and strengthening their values and cultural identity. This demonstrates that Instagram has become an integral part of shaping their connections with the outside world and also in fostering their local culture and economy.

Finally, Adoption signifies that the individual has fully embraced the new behavior in line with their knowledge, awareness, and attitude toward the stimulus (Syarifudin, 2009). In this study, Adoption refers to how the use of Instagram among the coastal community of Bungku Tengah influences their interactions, communication, and daily lives. This represents a journey where the community gradually accepts and integrates the platform into their culture. Based on the researcher's findings and observations, it can be concluded that the adoption of Instagram by the coastal community of Bungku Tengah has brought highly positive impacts and transformed their initial perceptions. Instagram serves as a window to the world, allowing them to celebrate their rich culture and natural environment, as well as promote local products, art, and traditions. This has also spurred economic growth and environmental awareness within their community. This transformation has brought a new spirit, connected them with new opportunities, and provided recognition for their beauty and diversity. Instagram is not just a social tool; it is a marvel that has turned hesitation into pride and inspired positive changes in how they live their lives and preserve their culture.

Based on these five stages of adoption theory, the following behavioral changes have been observed due to Instagram use:

The first significant change is evident in the trade sector. Fishermen in Bungku Tengah, whose primary commodity is seafood, previously relied solely on local markets. Now, they have successfully reached customers worldwide through Instagram. They leverage the platform to directly promote their catches. Beautiful images of freshly caught fish, accompanied by stories behind each expedition, attract the attention of buyers and seafood enthusiasts from various countries. Over time, fish sales have significantly increased, leading to improved economic well-being for the fishing community.

Beyond the trade sector, Instagram has also had a positive impact on the local tourism promotion industry. Fishing villages, once known only to local residents, have now become popular destinations explored by tourists from various regions. Through stunning photographs of natural beauty and daily life in the village, they have successfully created an extraordinary appeal. Instagram users interested in authentic stories and unique experiences have started to arrive, opening new economic opportunities through the tourism industry.

However, alongside these positive impacts, behavioral changes have also brought about certain challenges. A digital divide has emerged between older and younger generations. Some fishermen unaccustomed to technology feel left behind in marketing and promotion, requiring assistance to understand Instagram's potential. Meanwhile, the younger generation, increasingly drawn to the digital world, may neglect traditional activities that are cultural heritage.

Nevertheless, the overall impact of Instagram on Bungku Tengah district can be considered a positive transformation. This social media platform serves not only as a tool for market expansion but also to document and preserve fishing traditions. Through Instagram, their life stories can be widely disseminated, fostering understanding and mutual respect between cultures.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and previous discussion, it can be concluded that several factors influenced behavioral changes in the Bungku Tengah community regarding their use of Instagram as a social networking platform. These factors are Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption.

Among these five adoption factors, Awareness emerged as the most dominant in influencing the behavioral changes within the Bungku Tengah community. This heightened awareness of Instagram's benefits has significantly transformed the behavior of the coastal community in Bungku Tengah concerning their social media usage. Instagram has altered the community's perspective on accessing the wider world, serving as a bridge to educational information and a tool for economic development through promotions on the social network, such as sharing photos, videos, stories, and IGTV. With increased awareness of Instagram, users are able to take more intelligent and judicious steps in utilizing the platform, leading to more positive and beneficial experiences in their online interactions.

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