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THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
CAMPAIGNS ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A STUDY OF THE DIGITAL
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT
@BULE_SAMPAH

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Abstract:

The waste problem in Indonesia continues to increase as public awareness of environmental management is low. Plastic waste, in particular, has a serious impact on ecosystems and human health. Handling the environment requires not only a technical approach, but also a change in people's mindset and behavior. In this context, social media is utilized as a campaign tool to build public ecological awareness. This study aims to determine the impact of the environmental education campaign carried out by the Instagram account @bule_sampah through content with communication strategies on social media which is an effective means of delivering environmental education and has a real impact on the audience. This campaign is packaged in the form of visuals, informative narratives, and collaborative invitations that aim to build awareness and encourage changes in people's behavior towards environmental issues. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and the AIDA model as an analytical framework, this study found that the @bule_sampah account consistently utilizes visual content, educational narratives, and active interaction to attract attention, build interest, and encourage real action from the audience in waste management.

Keywords:

AIDA, Instagram, Environmental Campaign, Digital Communication, Social Media, @bule_sampah

Introduction

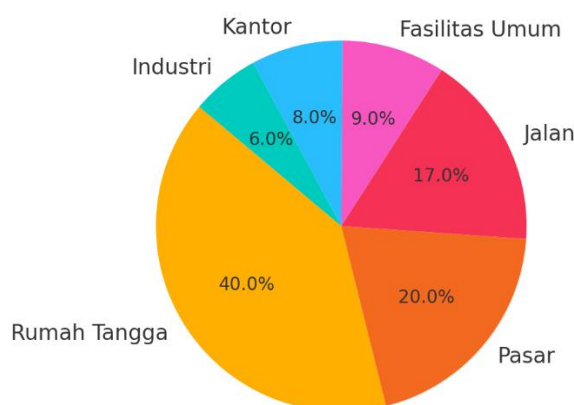
Environmental issues are increasingly becoming a global concern as the negative impacts of human activities on nature increase, such as climate change, pollution, and the waste crisis. In Indonesia, environmental issues are also a serious challenge, especially related to waste management. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) noted that national waste production in 2022 will reach 68.5 million tons, and most of it has not been managed optimally. In dealing with these problems, communication strategies are key in delivering environmental conservation messages to the public. Digital transformation has changed the pattern of public communication, including in the realm of environmental campaigns. One approach that is now dominant is the digital communication strategy through social media.

Annually, the global waste volume is estimated at 2.01 billion tons, of which about 33% is not managed in an environmentally safe manner. It is projected that by 2050, the amount of solid waste in urban areas worldwide will increase to 3.4 billion tons. The largest increase in waste production occurs in developing countries, along with economic and population growth in these regions (Meiliyana Wijaya et al., 2024: 351).

Based on data from the National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN) of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, the total waste generation in 2022 reached 5.6 million tons, with DKI Jakarta as the largest contributor, producing around 71,300 tons of waste. This is due to the rapid development of the industrial era in various cities in the world has significantly depleted natural resources to meet the needs of its population. In the book "Global Environmental Issues" explains that, the issue of environmental conservation is one of the global challenges that continues to grow over time and time with increasing human activities that have a negative impact on ecosystems.

Figure 1: Distribution of Waste Sources in Indonesia - Circle Diagram

Distribusi Sumber Sampah di Indonesia



Social media has become an effective interaction space in building collective awareness. One platform that is widely utilized in social and environmental issue campaigns is Instagram, due to its highly visual and interactive features. The @bule_sampah account is one example of a prominent social media-based environmental communication initiative in Indonesia. This account uses a creative and educational approach in conveying messages of concern for waste and the environment, and has succeeded in attracting the attention of thousands of followers..

In this context, digital communication strategy becomes an important instrument to understand how an account is able to mobilize public attention, interest, and action on environmental issues. The AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) is a relevant analytical framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication carried out by @bule_sampah.

Through a descriptive qualitative approach, this research aims to examine the digital communication strategy applied by the @bule_sampah account in the environmental conservation campaign on Instagram. This research is important to illustrate how digital communication strategies can contribute to building awareness and encouraging public participation in environmental issues more broadly.

Based on the above background, the research entitled "The Impact Of Environmental Education Campaigns On Social Media: A Study Of The Digital Communication Strategy Of Instagram Account @Bule_Sampah" aims to analyze the digital communication strategy applied in environmental conservation campaigns, because there are several problems that become the background of the importance of this research. These problems relate to the low public awareness of environmentally friendly waste management, as well as the less than optimal utilization of social media as a means of education. The discussion above highlights the importance of an effective digital communication strategy in overcoming these problems, especially through the utilization of Instagram social media @bule_sampah as an environmental conservation campaign platform. This strategy is expected to increase awareness, change behavior, and encourage active community participation in maintaining environmental cleanliness.

Literature Review

Social media is now a potential alternative space to deliver educational campaigns widely. The Instagram account @bule_sampah comes as a creative initiative that focuses on waste management education and environmental preservation. This research aims to find out how digital communication strategies are applied by the account in delivering environmental messages. Literature Review The AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) is used as an analytical tool in this research. This model explains how the communication process can attract attention, build interest, foster desire, and encourage audience action. This model is suitable for observing the effectiveness of digital communication strategies in social campaigns on social media.

Table 1: Previous Research

No	Researcher Name	Year	Research Title	Research Focus	Theoretical/Conceptual Framework
1.	Wuersch, L. dkk.	2024	Using a Digital Internal Communication Strategy for Digital Capability Development	Internal digital communication strategy in organizations	Digital communication strategy

2.	Aisyah Putri Ramadhani	2019	Communication Strategy of Greenpeace Indonesia	Persuasive strategy of environmental campaigns	Psychodynamics, Sociocultural, Construction of Meaning
3.	Nadia	2024	Environmental Campaign Strategy @gps.tembung	Environmental conservation campaign through Instagram	AIDDA Theory
4.	Gilberth Christopolus	2024	AIDA Communication Strategy in Canoe Tour Advertisement	Visual promotion strategy on Instagram	AIDA Theory, Social Semiotics
5.	Aulia Shabrina, dkk.	2023	Cleanliness Campaign Strategy by Pandawara Group	Participatory hygiene campaign via TikTok	Digital participatory communication

All of these studies have substantial relevance to this research. Most point to the importance of effective digital communication strategies in delivering campaign messages through social media. This research contributes by combining the AIDA model and a qualitative approach to analyze environmental campaign content on Instagram, which has not been studied much in depth in the local context with a focus on the @bule_sampah account.

Definition of Rural Tourism

Digital Communication Strategy

The development of information technology has driven a transformation in communication practices, including in the realm of social and environmental campaigns. In the digital era, communication strategies are no longer one-way, but demand interaction and active participation from the audience through various digital platforms. Therefore, an understanding of digital communication strategies is important as a foundation in examining the approach used by the @bule_sampah account in delivering its campaign messages. This subsection will discuss the definition, characteristics, and important elements of digital communication strategies that are relevant to the social media context. Digital communication is one form of significant change that emerges along with the development of information and communication technology in the modern era.

Digital communication has changed the way humans interact, work, learn, and convey messages as a whole. This activity includes sending, receiving, and exchanging information by utilizing various digital devices and platforms. This understanding is reinforced by the opinion of Asari et al. (2023) in Nofiasari et al. (2024: 9) which states that digital communication is the process becomes an important tool in accelerating and facilitating the dissemination of information

Furthermore, Tankard & Werner (2011) in Nofiasari et al. (2024: 9) explain that digital communication uses online media to connect communicators and communicants. Digital media provides easy access, speed of information delivery, and a wide range, making it an effective means of communication in the current era. Digital communication now includes various activities such as using social media to share ideas, email for business, virtual conferences, and online collaboration. Despite its convenience, digital communication also poses challenges such as data security issues, privacy protection, and information authenticity.

In understanding digital communication strategy, it is important to first know the meaning of the word "strategy". According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), a strategy is a carefully designed plan to carry out certain activities to achieve goals. Sisca Spetiani et al. (2023) added that strategy is a complex network of ideas, understandings, experiences, and goals that help a person decide on the right steps to achieve goals. The term was originally used in a military context, but has now evolved and is applied in various fields including education and communication. Today's digital communication strategy serves not only as a promotional tool, but also as an educational medium and to build long-term relationships with audiences. One important element in this strategy is the use of storytelling techniques that can create emotional attachment between brands and consumers (Pamungkas, Saputra, & Laksana, 2024).

In the era of digital transformation, the right communication strategy is the key to the success of delivering messages efficiently and effectively. According to Abdul Luky Shofi'ul Azmi S. et al. (2025), an effective digital communication strategy includes several important aspects, including:

1. Choose the right platform, such as email for formal communication, instant messaging apps for teams, video conferencing for discussions, and social media for marketing.
2. Use clear and professional language to avoid misunderstandings.
3. Response time management, so that every message is responded to quickly and efficiently.
4. Application of digital communication etiquette, including appropriate use of symbols and maintaining privacy.
5. Utilization of technology, such as communication analysis tools and information management systems.
6. Adjustment of communication style to audience characteristics, both internally and externally.
7. Security and privacy protections, such as the use of encryption and secure communication platforms.

After understanding the concepts and elements of digital communication strategies, the next discussion will be directed to the context of the environmental conservation campaign that is the focus of the application of these strategies.

Conservation Environment Campaign

The issue of environmental conservation is a global concern that continues to be voiced through various forms of campaigns. Environmental campaigns aim not only to provide information, but also to raise awareness and encourage changes in people's behavior towards the environment. In this context, the right communication approach is needed so that campaign messages can reach and mobilize the public effectively. This subsection reviews the definition

of a campaign, the purpose of an environmental conservation campaign, and the theory used in the analysis, namely the AIDA model that explains the stages in attracting attention to encourage real action from the audience.

Campaigns are a form of communication activity that aims to disseminate information and influence public attitudes and behavior towards certain issues. According to KBBI, a campaign is a simultaneous action to fight or organize a certain action, while Arlanthy et al. (2023) emphasize that campaigns can be realized through digital programs that reach a wide audience. Fadli and Sazali (2023) refer to campaigns as strategic communication activities by individuals or organizations, while Syafirakurniasari and Widiani (2020) emphasize the importance of developing campaign messages that consider seven aspects of communication, namely: credibility, context, content, clarity, continuity, communication channels, and the ability of the audience to receive messages.

The purpose of an environmental conservation campaign is not only to convey information, but also to form awareness, attitudes, and encourage behavior change (Dewi & Syauki, 2022; Ayu & Anggraini, 2023). These stages of change include cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude), and behavioral (action) changes. In practice, communication approaches such as the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model are very relevant to use. This theory explains the audience's psychological process from attraction to taking action. In the context of the @bule_sampah account, the AIDA model is seen through visual content that attracts attention, educational narratives that foster interest, emotional invitations to create desire, and participatory calls that encourage real actions such as sorting waste or participating in beach cleanup actions (Kotler & Keller, 2009; Soehardjo, 2021; Syahputra et al., 2025).

Thus, environmental conservation campaigns require a communication strategy that is structured, adaptive to digital media, and able to move audiences through cognitive stages to real action. Environmental conservation is the moral and spiritual responsibility of mankind. In Islamic teachings, the preservation of the earth is part of man's duty as khalifah, as stated in QS. Al-A'raf verse 56 which prohibits damage after repair. Environmental conservation is a shared responsibility that is not only social but also spiritual. In the Islamic perspective, Allah SWT emphasizes the importance of maintaining the balance of nature as part of man's duty as khalifah on earth, as stated in Surah Al-A'raf verse 56, Allah SWT says:

نَیْسَحْمَلًا نَمْ یَبْرِقُ اللّٰهُ تَمْحَرُّ نَا اَعْمَطُوْا فَاَوْخُ هُوَ عَدَاوِ اِهْلًا صَا دَعْبُ ضَرْ لَا یَفْ اَوْ دَسْفَتْ لُوْ

"And do not make corruption in the earth, after (Allah) has made it good, and pray to Him with fear and hope. Verily, the mercy of Allah is very near to those who do good" (Al-A'raf: 56).

As a moral foundation in protecting the environment, the Qur'an reminds mankind of the importance of preserving the earth that has been entrusted to them. This responsibility is not only limited to self-care, but also covers all aspects of life, including nature and waste management. In this context, environmental conservation campaigns play an important role in educating and encouraging people to improve their behavioral patterns towards waste management. The campaign also aims to actively involve the community in environmental

conservation actions, for example through activities such as beach cleanups that invite direct participation as a form of concern for nature (Ayu & Anggraini, 2023).

Environmental campaigns exist as a tangible manifestation of this responsibility, aiming to raise awareness, educate the public, and encourage behavioral changes towards waste management and nature (Ayu & Anggraini, 2023). However, simply conveying information is not enough. A strategic and creative communication approach is needed to create a sustainable impact. Environmental campaigns must be able to arouse public awareness and involvement (Dewi & Syauki, 2022). Environmental campaigns also encourage the formation of environmental communities and pressure policy makers to act (Shabrina et al., 2023). In addition, these campaigns provide tangible benefits, such as preventing pollution, maintaining environmental health, and building social awareness (Princessa & Dirgantara, 2024). With technological advances, environmental campaigns are now easy to follow through social media, such as following accounts, sharing information, and taking concrete actions (Greenpeace in Princessa & Dirgantara, 2024).

Media Sosial

Social media has become a key medium for information dissemination and social movement mobilization in the digital era. Instagram, as one of the most popular visual platforms, provides space for organizations and individuals to build interesting and interactive communications. The @bule_sampah account is an example of utilizing Instagram as a means of environmental conservation campaigns with a creative and value-based approach.

Social media has developed into a major tool in delivering social messages, including environmental campaigns. Through social media, communication becomes broader, faster, and more interactive (Pratiwi et al., 2023; Fadli & Sazili, 2023). In Indonesia, social media usage is very high, with an average usage duration of almost ± 9 hours/day, showing its potential as an effective digital campaign channel (Boestam & Devrianti, 2022; Latif & Kusumandyoko, 2021).

Instagram, as one of the most popular visual platforms, enables the delivery of powerful campaign messages through images, videos and infographics. The high user engagement on this platform makes it a powerful tool for building public awareness and participation (Andriendi et al., 2023; Maheswari et al., 2023). Instagram provides ample space for the implementation of digital campaigns to reach a wider audience and build audience engagement through the utilization of various visual formats such as images, videos, and infographics. (Maheswari et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the effectiveness of Instagram as a communication medium in digital campaigns can also be seen from the high level of user involvement. In his work entitled Social media and its influence on the political participation of novice voters in Pilkada, (Andriendi et al., 2023) stated that the utilization of Instagram social media through its characteristics in the network indicator shows a figure of 79.7%, which is included in the high category. This indicates that the use of Instagram for communication and interaction purposes in the campaign obtained a significant level of involvement from its users.

In communicating through the Instagram platform, users have various interaction options, such as giving likes to posts, writing comments, sharing content with other users, saving posts for viewing again, having private conversations through the direct message feature, and browsing content using relevant hashtags. Hashtags can also be utilized as part of a social media campaign strategy. Therefore, through the Instagram platform, researchers identified a form of campaign activity that is actively carried out by utilizing the available features (Fadli & Sazali, 2022).

One concrete example is the @bule_sampah account, which raises the issue of environmental conservation with a creative and educational approach. This account not only conveys information, but also invites its followers to actively participate through interactive content and hands-on activities (Fadli & Sazali, 2022; 2023). It acts as an educational campaign media that conveys environmental messages with a light, humorous, and easy-to-understand approach by various groups. Through uploads of photos and videos of cleaning activities, infographics, and other educational content, this account seeks to build public awareness about the importance of keeping the environment clean.

The digital communication strategy implemented by @bule_sampah shows how campaign messages can be packaged creatively and consistently. With a relaxed, distinctive, funny, yet informative language style, as well as the use of visuals that are relevant to the issues raised. The content not only aims to convey information, but also invites audiences to actively participate, for example by taking part in challenges, spreading campaign messages, or even participating in clean-up activities organized by this community.

Methodology

The approach used in this research is a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Creswell, qualitative research is an approach in research used to understand problems related to humans or the social environment. The aim is to provide a comprehensive picture which is then presented in narrative form, and presents in-depth data obtained from reliable sources of information (Roosinda, et al., 2021). The data collected is then processed and presented in various forms, then analyzed in an in-depth, clear, and detailed manner. The analysis is complemented by arguments supported by theory for verification and justification.

In this qualitative research, the data collection techniques used aim to obtain in-depth information about digital communication strategies in the environmental conservation campaign on the @bule_sampah Instagram account. According to Sugiyono (2012, cited in Fiantika et al., 2022), there are several data collection techniques that will be used, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. In this qualitative research, the data collection techniques used aim to obtain in-depth information about digital communication strategies in the environmental conservation campaign on the @bule_sampah Instagram account.

In analyzing the digital communication strategy used on the @bule_sampah Instagram account, this research uses the AIDA theory (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action). This theory was chosen because it is relevant to examine the effectiveness of campaign messaging through digital media, especially in the context of social promotion and audience behavior change. The AIDA theory explains that there are four stages that must be passed in order for the message to be accepted and influence the audience, namely attracting attention (attention), arousing

interest (interest), fostering desire (desire), and encouraging real action (action). By using this framework, researchers can identify how the visual strategy and content narrative on the @bule_sampah account are structured to achieve the goals of the environmental conservation campaign.

The research was conducted online and offline with the object of study being the Instagram account @bule_sampah. Data collection was conducted during the period February to April 2025, focusing on observing and analyzing the content published during that time. The main data was obtained from six campaign posts of the @bule_sampah account, which were selected through the level of interaction, message relevance, and format diversity (carousels and reels). Data sources consisted of:

- Primary data: in-depth interviews with account manager Debora Keziah and account owner Benedict Wermter and 14 informants (followers & volunteers). The informants were purposively selected, i.e. those who have direct experience in managing, following, or being actively involved in the accounts' digital campaigns.
- Secondary data: journals, scientific articles, and documents relevant to the research topic.

Data Collection Technique Three main techniques were used:

1. Observation: to observe the type of content, campaign messages and audience responses on Instagram.
2. In-depth interviews: semi-structured to explore campaign strategies and challenges.
3. Documentation: Collection of content (images, captions, videos) for visual and narrative analysis.

To ensure validity, triangulation of sources and techniques was used, by comparing data from interviews, observations, and campaign upload documentation, and analysis in this study was carried out with reference to the Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014) model, which consists of:

1. Data reduction: sorting and summarizing relevant data.
2. Data presentation: organizing data in table, narrative, and graph formats.
3. Verification and inference: evaluating the findings based on patterns and links to the AIDA theory

The analysis process was interactive and iterative during and after data collection, to build a strong and credible interpretation of the digital communication strategy used in the @bule_sampah campaign. Some of the challenges in data collection include; limited interview time due to the busy schedules of the interviewees, difficulty accessing comprehensive audience interactions (due to limited internal account statistics).

Analisis And Discussion

The Impact of the Environmental Education Campaign Through Social Media Content on the @bulesampah Instagram Account

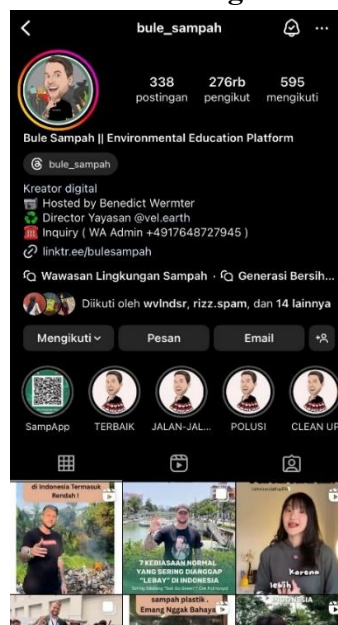
The Instagram account "Bule Sampah" (@bule_sampah) was created in October 2022, and began actively creating content on December 4, 2022, managed by Benedict Wermter. Benedict Wermter, commonly referred to as bule sampah, has a background as a German environmental

journalist who is now active in environmental issues in Indonesia, especially regarding waste. He also said that "Indonesia has a big waste problem" this is also the reason why Benedict made an environmental conservation campaign in Indonesia through his Instagram account. The @bule_sampah account utilizes the visual power of Instagram by presenting various types of content that are informative, educative, and entertaining.

"I think the impact we need in Indonesia is much more urgent than in my home country in Europe. In Europe or America, Australia there is already a pretty good waste management system and there is also awareness of the environment. But here it's not enough and that's why I like coming here because I think we have to make a change immediately. That's actually my motivation to give access to information and communication to the locals because Indonesia is a very big country, number four in the world" (Interview result, with Beneddict Wermter, owner of @bule_sampah account, March 29, 2025).

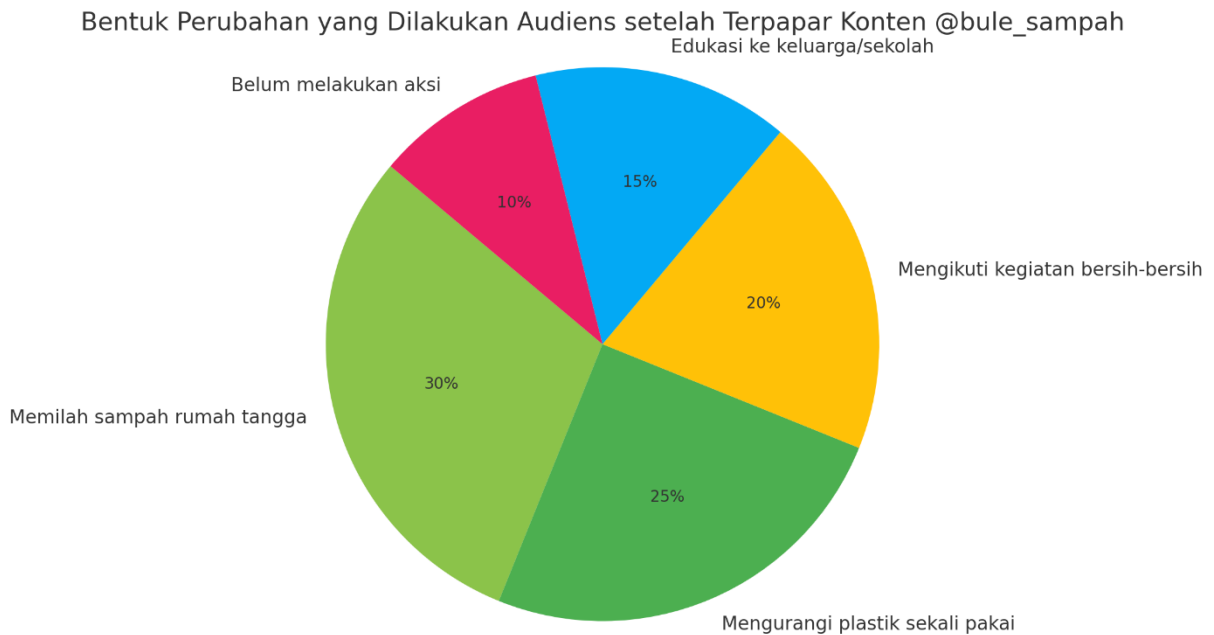
"I have focused on the plastics industry for more than seven years. As a journalist, I made video productions. Basically feature stories in European media about the plastics industry, and environmental relations. Then I came to Indonesia back 8 years ago as a backpacker. I traveled around from Medan to Ambon and really liked the country. It's beautiful but polluted. Let's do a social media campaign and start reporting for Indonesians. That's basically how it all started three years ago". (Interview result, with Beneddict Wermter @bule_sampah account owner, March 29, 2025).

Figure 1: Account Instagram Benedict



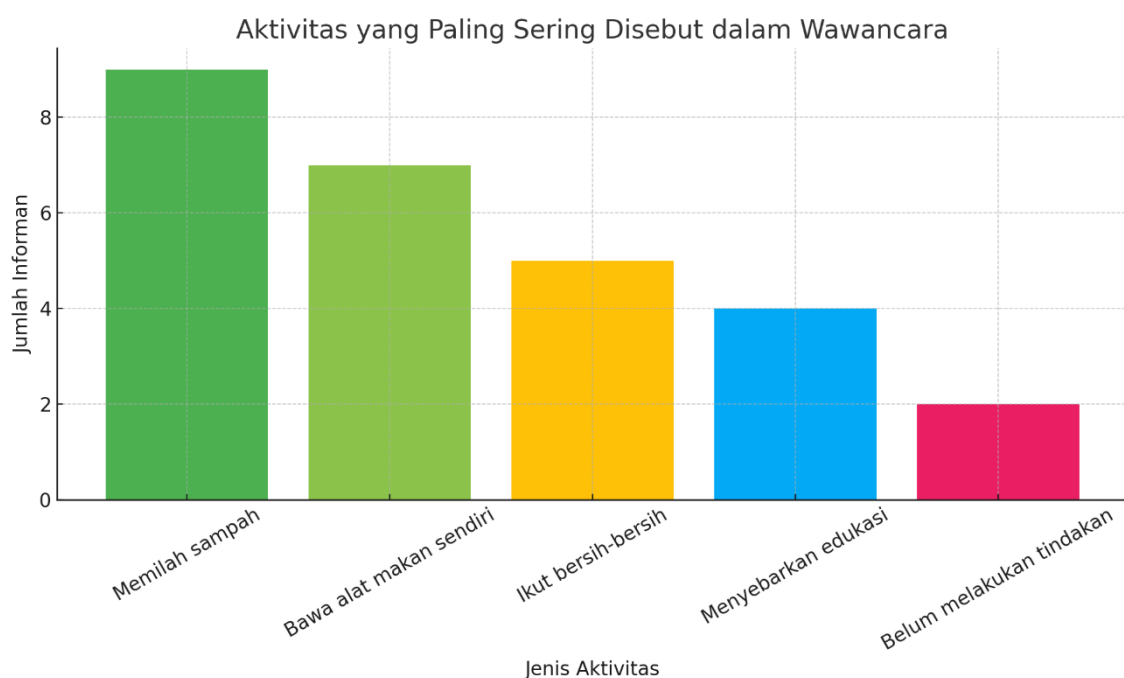
Source: https://www.instagram.com/bule_sampah

Figure 2. Circle Diagram – Forms of Change Made by Audiences after Exposure to @bule_sampah Content



Following the environmental education campaign from the @bule_sampah Instagram account. Most respondents started sorting household waste (30%), followed by reducing the use of single-use plastics (25%), and involvement in environmental cleanup activities (20%). Others are educating their families/schools (15%), and only a small number have yet to take concrete action (10%). This visual reinforces the finding that the campaign not only builds awareness but also inspires direct action..

Figure 3. Bar Diagram - Activities Most Frequently Mentioned in Interviews



This graph displays the activities most frequently done by informants after the exposed to the campaign content of the @bule_sampah account. The most dominant activity is sorting waste, followed by bringing their own cutlery, joining environmental cleanup movements, and spreading education to people around them. This graph reinforces the finding that the campaign has a real impact on the audience's lifestyle and environmental awareness

Table 1. Campaign Impact Analysis Based on AIDA Theory

AIDA Stages	Key Findings	Example of an Informant
Attention	Interesting visuals, the account manager is a Caucasian who cares about local issues	"At first, I was interested because outsiders were concerned about our environment."
Interest	Relaxed delivery style, not patronizing, creative and relatable content	"The way it's delivered is nice, fun, so we want to keep watching and participating."
Desire	Grow awareness and empathy for the impact of environmental pollution	"I want education about recycling in schools."
Action	Real action: sorting waste, participating in clean-ups, creating social programs	"I set up a garbage-for-rice exchange booth, and educated the public about the environment."

This table presents the stages of audience response based on the AIDA model. Each stage shows the psychological and social process that the audience goes through, from initial attention to the emergence of concrete actions in support of environmental conservation. The findings prove that educational campaigns on social media can result in real behavioral transformation.

Table 2: Summary of Informant Behavior Change

Informant Name	Changes Perceived Changes	Real Action
Karolina	More care and awareness of waste	Bring tumblers, sort waste, compost organics
Ririn Riyana	Inspired to create a social movement	Creating a community on social media "Teman Lingkungan", cleaning up in Banjarmasin
Himawati	Aware of the importance of recycling	Start sorting plastic waste
Meitin Lolon	Termotivasi hidup minim sampah	Reduce plastic, campaign in the community
Aldo	Participate in volunteer activities	Clean-up field actions, and having a community on social media

Conclusion

This research shows that the Instagram account @bule_sampah applies an effective digital communication strategy in delivering environmental conservation campaign messages. Through the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model approach, it is found that @bule_sampah is able to attract the audience's attention with strong visuals and relevant messages, arouse interest through educational and light-hearted narratives, and foster the audience's desire to get involved through interactive content and participatory invitations. This strategy ultimately encourages real action from followers, such as re-sharing content, participating in clean-up activities, and changing daily behavior related to waste management.

The main strength of this account lies in its ability to build emotional closeness with the audience through a personalized communicative approach and consistent visuals. The results of this study confirm that Instagram, can be a strategic tool in supporting environmental conservation campaigns that are oriented towards changing public behavior. This shows that a well-designed digital communication strategy can be a powerful tool in driving social change and shaping pro-environmental behavior in today's digital society. Based on interviews with the followers of the account, it is known that many of them feel educated, inspired, and even encouraged to change their habits in managing waste. Some informants even utilized the content from the account as educational material in their communities or neighborhoods. This means that the campaign not only raises awareness, but also creates a chain effect in spreading the values of environmental conservation.

Thus, the purpose of this research is stated to be achieved, namely to identify and analyze the digital communication strategies used by the Instagram account @bule_sampah in the environmental conservation campaign and its impact on the audience. Research Contribution This research contributes in two main aspects:

- **Teoritis: Theoretical:** This research strengthens the applicability of the AIDA model in the context of digital media-based social campaigns, particularly environmental issues, and shows that this model can measure the stages of message effectiveness in non-commercial contexts.
- **Practical:** This research can serve as a reference for communication practitioners, environmental activists, and social media managers in designing impactful and interactive digital communication strategies.

The results of this study can encourage policy makers, especially in the fields of environment and public communication, to take social media more seriously as a platform for education and participatory campaigns.

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