

## WOMEN'S RECEPTION ON SOCIAL SUPPORT IN INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT @GETHAPPY.ID

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### *Abstrack*

Previous research also shows that social media has positive and negative roles related to interpersonal relationships and mental health. The social media used significantly increases social capital and mental well-being, which benefits people with low self-esteem and life satisfaction. Some psychotherapists even use an Instagram platform as their therapeutic medium. This preliminary study frameworks are Stuart Hall's reception theory, the concept elaborations of social support and online social support, as well as a discussion of the character of social media, Instagram. This paper is based on a qualitative research with data from interviews with 3 female informants on 20-29 years old and *gethappy.id* account followers. This research succeeded in identifying 2 receptions that emerged from the female group of Instagram account followers *gethappy.id*. The dominant reader comes from informants who have severe physical health problems and mental health problems related to these physical health problems. Meanwhile, negotiating reader arise from informants who do not have personal physical and mental health problems, but who have a social environment with physical and mental health problems. Another important finding is that the main social support remains family and friends. Social media support is needed when the two main social supports are not present.

**Keywords:** reception theory, social support, social media, instagram, mental health

### **Abstrak**

Beberapa penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perempuan lebih rentan terhadap masalah kesehatan mental dibandingkan pria. Penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa media sosial memiliki peranan positif dan negative dalam hubungan antar pribadi dan kesehatan mental. Kegunaan sosial media meningkatkan modal sosial dan kesejahteraan mental., yang menguntungkan orang-orang dengan tingkat kepercayaan diri yang rendah dan kepuasan hidup. Beberapa ahli psikoterapi bahkan menggunakan platform Instagram yang mengandung gambar dan kata-kata sebagai media terapeutik. Kerangka pemikiran penelitian adalah teori resepsi (encoding-decoding) dari Stuart Hall, yang dielaborasi dengan konsep dukungan sosial dan dukungan sosial online, serta diskusi tentang karakter media sosial, Instagram. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan data yang didapatkan dari wawancara dengan 3 informan wanita berusia 20-29 tahun dan merupakan follower dari akun instagram @gethappy.id. Penelitian ini berhasil mengidentifikasi 2 pemaknaan yang muncul dari *follower* wanita. Pemaknaan dominan terjadi dari informan yang memiliki beberapa masalah kesehatan fisik dan mental. Sementara, pemaknaan negosiasi muncul dari informan yang tidak memiliki masalah kesehatan baik fisik ataupun mental, tetapi memiliki lingkungan sosial yang bersinggungan dengan masalah kesehatan fisik dan mental. Temuan lainnya dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dukungan sosial yang utama berasal dari keluarga dan teman. Dukungan sosial online diperlukan ketika tidak terdapat kedua dukungan sosial utama tersebut.

**Kata kunci:** Teori resepsi, dukungan sosial, media sosial, instagram, kesehatan mental

## INTRODUCTION

In social interaction, humans receive attention, appreciation, enthusiasm, acceptance, and help in other forms, which can make someone feel loved, cared for and valued. This is called social support (Will in Taylor (2006)). In other words, social support is a protective factor for symptoms of depression. Data from WHO in 2017 shows that depression is a mental health disorder that becomes the biggest health burden in the world, and around 300 million people in the world are suspected of having it (Trifiana, 2019). Peltzer and Pengpid research results (2018) show a high prevalence of depressive symptoms in Indonesian society (21.8%). This figure is even higher compared to neighboring countries and the prevalence of global depression which is only around 12, 1%.

Suicide is a matter of global concern and lack of social support is one of the factors causing suicide. Some studies have found that social support is directly related to the low incidence of suicide (Chioqueta and Stiles, 2007), while others find that social support is protective against suicide in the presence of risk factors such as negative life events (Meadows et al. , 2005; Yang and Clum, 1994). Other studies have found that social support works indirectly to reduce suicide by increasing other protective factors such as self-esteem (Kleiman and Liu, 2013).

Some research shows that social media plays a positive role in improving interpersonal relationships and mental health. The use of Facebook for example, significantly increases social capital and mental well-being which results in greater benefits for people suffering from low levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009). Research by Valkenburg et. al (2006) found that in social media, when someone gets positive feedback on their social media profiles, it can increase social self-esteem and subjective well-being in adolescents, while negative feedback will decrease it. Positive feedback gave rise to a new concept of online social support.

Through online social support, a bigger picture of social support and its relation to internet use can be understood (Perreault LaCoursiere, 2001). There are three factors of online social support i.e structure social networks, functional assistance that is available or actually received, and the nature of the support itself (Perreault LaCoursiere, 2001).

One form of online social support is through Instagram. In Indonesia, Instagram is the fourth social network media that is widely used after Youtube, Whatsapp and Facebook (Riyanto, 2019). Instagram alone has 22 million monthly active users in Indonesia. (Fajrina, 2016). Wang and Barry (2010) categorizes Instagram content into 8 categories. One of them is “captioned picture” content which prioritizes words rather than pictures. This is also in line with the rise of psychology therapists who use Instagram as their therapeutic medium. With Instagram therapy, people who need information about their mental health can see their posts. The therapists on Instagram make posts like poetry. The therapists make chunks of words laden with messages about embracing imperfections, self care, “growth mindset”, or dealing with syndromes and trauma (June, 2019). In Indonesia, some communities that care about mental health use social media as a platform for them to share information and support one another. One of the communities is Get Happy, (@gethappy.id) account has the most posts and the number of followers at the time of this research. The founder of @gethappy.id, Caecilia Dian Tedjapawitra, stated that @gethappy.id is a platform that is a source of information and education for friends who are depressed and who accompany depression sufferers. Get Happy was born with the aim of helping others to help us. The purpose of gethappy.id is to be able to provide support for those in need, especially women (Stefani, 2016).

Peltzer and Pengpid’s research states that women have higher rates of depressive symptoms than men, although the difference is

not significant. Indonesian Council of Mental Health Agency (Bakeswa) expert researchers, Nova Riyanti Yusuf, also revealed that women experience emotional problems four times more than men (Manafe, 2018). According to Adisyah (2017), mental health disorders that are often experienced by women include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD), anxiety and eating disorders. The latter occurs because women are bombarded with media with body image and beauty standards such as having to be white, have long straight hair and slim. This means, women have mental health problems related to biological and social conditions, especially gender inequality.

Eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia are two examples of diseases that generally arise due to unhealthy lifestyles chosen by people who have mental disorders. Most of those who suffer from it are women who experience a crisis of confidence with their bodies (Febriana, 2018). Related to social support, several studies see that women receive more support than men with a percentage of 54.55% for women and 51.52% for men and different sexes will also have different effects on the need for social support, including support to be received (Tyas & Asyanti, 2015).

Based on the explanation above, then the question arises, in this digital age, how do women then seek social support in the online form? What is the picture of women accessing social support from social media, especially Instagram? Therefore, the main question of this paper is **how women's receptions on social support in instagram account @gethappy.id?**

The framework of this paper using from Stuart Hall, the elaboration of the concepts of social support and online social support, as well as a discussion of the character of social media, Instagram. According to Clarks (2005), social support is closely related to physical health. Clark organizes studies of social support into three age-appropriate categories: adolescents, middle-aged adults, and older adults. According

to him, there are different social support needs in each age category.

**Adolescents** could develop some kinds of sensitive feelings, which may impact on their health if they do not get adequate social attention from others. They may become involved in an unfortunate situation that makes them feel overwhelmed or awkward. The adolescent is still developing, could easily experience some strain to their emotion if no help is immediately available. Anxiety and depression are two main psychological disorders that often can be seen among the adolescents. For adolescents, receiving social support is very essential for adolescents to become successful with themselves and achieve a satisfactory level at school. Adolescents mostly need family and peer support.

**In the Middle-Aged Adults** time, the importance of social support continues well into adulthood for everyone, especially in health issue. Many studies indicate that anyone who has high social support tends to have less chance of getting depression and anxiety disorders. There is a significant relation between emotions and health in this time of life. Anyone who has positive emotion and beliefs is likely to enhance their physical health.

Mothers with children who have permanent and chronic diseases usually become overwhelmed with all of the demands. They often feel burdened because it takes too much responsibility to take care of disabled children and meet such social demands as work at same time. Hope and good social support are very important elements to help reinforce those affected mothers. The availability of social support from others, especially family members, helps the affected mothers to adjust to environmental demands.

Many adults normally deal with a lot of stress at work. The high demands and low social contact/support within the workforce tend to cause the development of depressive symptoms among workers over a period of time. A high level of social support from a supervisor may

help prevent depression from developing.

The physical functioning of **older adults** usually weakens as they become older. It is the key factor in predicting the health outcome of older adults is their status at the time they retire. The body and immune system of older adults usually become fragile as they become older. The resource of social support also tends to decrease somewhat. These several factors combined are the key to predict and control the health of older adults, such as Employment Status, Health, Cancer, Stress. Once an individual's mental health declines at any point during their retirement ages, it would increase the likelihood for negative elements to persist with the impacted individuals.

The use of the Internet to get social support is a controversial and much debated issue about the social effects of the Internet. Previous studies from various scientific disciplines show that the Internet supports the exchange of elements of offline social support including information support (Kinnane and Milne, 2010), emotional support (Coulson, Buchanan and Aubeeluck, 2007) and assessment support (Letourneau et al., 2012). There is also evidence of building meaningful relationships (Parks and Floyd, 1996) and their suitability to promote health education and health (White and Dorman, 2001). On the other hand, some evidence seems to support that time spent online increases social isolation (Nie, 2001) and consequently decreases the quality of relationships with family and friends (Sanders, Field, Diego, and Kaplan., 2000).

Coulson, Buchanan and Aubeeluck (2007) suggest that providing social support using online applications enables people to overcome geographical and time constraints, connect to diverse people with different experiences, opinions and perspectives, and provide anonymity to group users. Most online social support groups provide assistance through groups and face-to-face meetings; but an increasing number of people reported feeling easier and more comfortable meeting their

needs through involvement in online support networks, also known as "virtual health-related communities" (Eysenbach et.al., 2004).

Moreover, according to Reevy and Maslach (2001), women consistently report seeking and receiving higher levels of emotional support than men do. In contrast, women and men do not usually differ in reported amounts of informational or tangible support, although in one study men reported a greater number of people who provided financial aid to them than women did. According to Poerwandari (2005), there are three explanations, why women are vulnerable to mental health problems, namely biological explanations, social explanations, and explanations of interactions. Biological explanations explain that men and women have different mental health problems because of their biological differences. Men have hormonal factors that tend to be more aggressive than women and because they do not give birth to a child, the biological ties with children tend not to be as strong as women who give birth, this causes men to be less concerned. While women are more prone to depression, this is evidenced by the phenomenon of baby blue or depression after childbirth which is proven to be experienced by some women.

## METHODOLOGY

This preliminary research is based on research using a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews with 3 female informants who are followers of the @gethappy.id account as a data collection technique. In Indonesia, some communities that care about mental health use social media as a platform for them to share information and support one another. The communities are Into The Light, Get Happy, Indonesian Schizophrenia Care Community, Indonesia Mental Health Care Foundation, and I Smile 4 You (Fanada, 2017). The @gethappy.id account was chosen because it has the highest number of posts and followers among the 5 mental health accounts on Instagram (see Figure 1). Meanwhile, female followers

become the focus of research because it is related to social support, some studies see that women receive more support than men with a percentage of 54.55% for women and 51.52% for men and different sexes will also have an effect which differ in the need for social support including the support that will be received (Tyas & Asyanti, 2015).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Reception Analysis of Social Support and Instagram.

According to Stuart Hall, audiences decode media messages through three possible receptions, namely (Hall in Durham & Kellner, 2006): Dominant-reader, negotiate-reader, and opposition-reader. For the first informant, informant A, the condition of her divorced parents and her poor relationship with her brother made him feel she had to be independent. Being convicted with stage 2B cervical cancer made her mentally feel down. However, she still did not want to burden her family, but informant A continued to seek support through her best friend, Kinanti. Informant A felt that words of comfort were given by Kinanti, or just a reminder message to eat and take medicine from Kinanti and also her family as support for her. In addition, recognition from people around her of the achievements she got even the slightest was considered as support.

But sometimes when she is alone and mentally down, at that time her best friend and family are busy with their business. Back again with the principle that she does not want to burden others and her desires that do not want to be dissolved by her mental ups and downs, making informant A divert it by reading books or playing social media. The social media it uses are YouTube and Instagram. Through youtube, informant A usually watches cartoons while Instagram mostly she uses to view accounts that contain information about mental health or accounts that contain positive quotations and motivate one of them @gethappy.id.

According to informant A, social support that she understands is when there is a problem, when she feels inferior, and when she needs attention, some listen to her complaints, some remind her that she is valuable and some remind her to care for himself. When reading the messages in the @gethappy.id account, informant A is like getting a friend who really understands the situation and also the messages on the @gethappy.id account remind her to live more positively. One of them is facing the disease. At that time, informant A felt very down and insecure of herself, while informant A accessed the account @gethappy.id there was a message which she felt returned to make her feel worthy and worthy of “you deserve good things, you deserve to be happy, you deserve to feel loved, whole and want just as you are”.

Encoding of the message is about self-acceptance and self-appreciation. Informant A decodes the message to remind her that she is not as low as she thinks. And despite being ill she deserves to be happy and should not pressure herself. The second informant was informant B, an only child, but stated that she was an independent women. Parents and friends are the parties that have many roles to support her lives. In making a decision or agreement to go to a place, informant B still communicates with her parents, even though her parents actually allow it. For personal things that occur in her life such as love problems or unpleasant things that he faces everyday that cause her mood to fall apart, informant B usually contacts her friend. Informant B has a lot of friends but what can be said is not many friends, only two or three people. According to her, friends can listen more when she tells stories or complains and it is not uncommon, she also asks for advice from her friends regarding the circumstances she faces.

Personally, informant B had no problems with physical or mental health. But she cares about mental health because she saw many of her friends experiencing stress or depression. Informant B felt that she did not want to be

depressed and wanted to be someone who could help her friends who were depressed. Informant B often sought information about mental health and exchanged ideas with her friends with psychological backgrounds. Informant B is also quite active in finding information about mental health through the internet, for example articles in the medium blog or following Instagram accounts that have positive quotes or information about mental health, such as the @gethappy.id account.

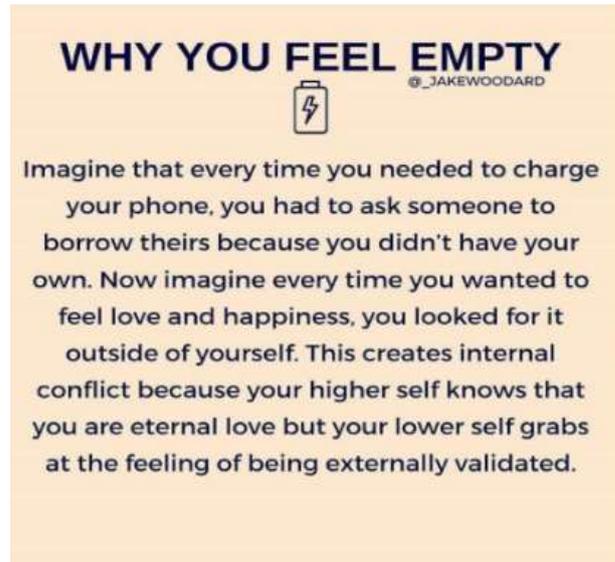
According to informant B, the content of the @gethappyid account can be understood and understood by the readers. One example of a quote that is remembered by informant B is “You deserve good things, you deserve to be happy, you deserve to feel loved, whole and want just as you are”. (Figure 2)



**Figure 2. Post “You Deserve Good Things”**

**Source: @gethappy.id**

The form of encoding of the message above is a message for self-acceptance and self-appreciation. Through these quotes, informant B decodes her life to become more confident about herself especially when she feels insecure. But there are times when posting on that account according to informant B does not give her support. Some of the posts in question are the two posts below:



**Figure 3. Post “Why You Feel Empty”**

**Source: @gethappy.id**

Encoding posts with the title “Why You Feel Empty” (figure 3) is a post about the reason someone feels empty. A message about why we feel empty is because we often feel we need validation from people around us and that can’t be always obtained. When in fact we do not really need validation from people around us, because who knows ourselves is ourselves. But because the message delivered was too long, this post was actually decoded by informant B as a boring and patronizing message.

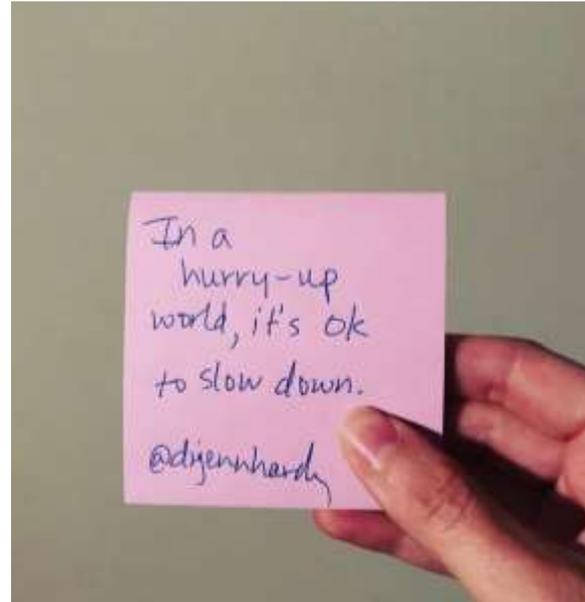
The third informant, informant C, grew up in the Minang family and has been attending school outside of town since high school. Make informant C feel closer to her best friend. Her family rarely talks about personal matters. In contrast to when she talked with her best friend, all the personal things she could reveal. Sometimes her best friend only listens to what she is complaining about, and sometimes relates complaints in their lives with their favorite Korean drama stories and according to informant C, that is enough to support her. Just listening is enough to motivate her not to be sad.

At the time of high school informant C claimed to have experienced emotional instability and at that time she vented to objects that are around her and not infrequently damage

the objects around her. At that time, according to informant C, it was still taboo to talk about mental health. Informant C herself recovered by reading and learning by herself to stabilize her emotions. So according to informant C now she is grateful that many accounts on Instagram are aware of mental health. Instagram users are more willing to tell stories and seek help from problems faced, especially those related to mental health. Some content in the account @gethappy.id much discusses LGBT about suicide prevention. When reading the comments column, informant C compared herself to others and felt that her life was not as heavy as that of other followers.

At present informant C acknowledges that she is in a state of distress with her work and sometimes the friend in whom the story is also has another busy schedule. There were times when informant C contacted her parents or older brother. But sometimes the family advises her too much when she just feels she needs to be heard. To divert her feelings that are being depressed, informant C often reads the content @gethappy.id making her not feel alone when she is sad. She feels reminded without feeling judged so she feels understood and gets support. One of the posts that made C informants feel supported and could live their lives more positively is: "In a hurry-up world, it's OK to slow down" ( figure 4). Informant C's encoding of the message is so that we enjoy every moment of our lives and not be too hasty just because we see other people faster in doing something. Informant C decoded the message to enjoy the process of her work when her friends began to finish when she saw this post she was reminded to be grateful and not in a hurry and not based on what others achieved.

From the explanation above, two reading-positions from three informants were found. Informant A and informant C interpret social support messages in a dominant-reading, where according to them all posts make them feel empowered and feel more positive in their daily activities. Informant B is in the negotiate-



**Figure 4.**Post“*In a hurry-up world, it’s OK to slow down*”

**Source:** @gethappy.id

reading. According to her, the @gethappy.id account is full of messages that support her but not all of them. Sometimes messages that are too long and long-winded make it feel that what is written is not as easy as its realization.

All three informants received support when viewing the Instagram account @gethappy.id. But what they get is not as much as getting support from family or friends. Account@gethappy.id gave support in the form of attention, understanding and recognition. But besides these three things, informants need support in the form of being listened to. Where they did not get this from the @gethappy.id account. It can be said that the process of finding social support through Instagram is an alternative for them when they do not want to burden people around them to support them or there is also nothing they can contact to provide support.

(Sanders, Field, Diego, and Kaplan., 2000) revealed that seeking online social support reduces the quality of relationships with family and friends. This research proves the opposite, online social support is only an alternative form of social support itself.

## Discussion

Social support proved to be a literal savior. People who are supported by close relationships with friends, family, or fellow church members, jobs, or other support groups are less susceptible to poor health and premature death. Individuals suffering from leukemia or heart disease have a higher survival rate if they have broad social support. There is also a strong bond between social support and welfare measures. Those who have close personal relationships face better with a variety of stressors, including mourning, job loss, rape, and illness.

In this study it was found that the family has an important role as a source of social support. In important choices for informants' lives such as work or school, the family becomes a place to exchange opinions. But family relationships are sometimes based on who is the oldest and who is young, making informants less comfortable sharing personal experiences. Personal things like love or pressure they face, friends have an important role. The same age and being in the same phase of life make the informants feel listened to and understood.

This study found that family and friends were people who played a role in providing support but the support provided also differed in output for each informant. In this study all informants agreed that more emotional support they got from friends. Similarity in age and similarity in busyness makes informants feel listened without feeling judged makes informants feel emotional support from friends. Conditions and events that are almost the same between informants and friends are also the reason for the emotional closeness. In addition, all informants stated that their family was a material support provider. The assistance they provide in the form of materials for the need for treatment or daily needs when the informant is experiencing financial shortages.

When informants get social support there are diverse components of social support. These components are emotional attachment, social integration, reassurance of worth, reliable

reliance, guidance and opportunity to nurture (opportunity of nurturance) ). While some of the benefits of social support will increase productivity through increased motivation, quality of reasoning, job satisfaction and reduce the impact of work stress.

## Women and Social Support.

Several previous studies have shown that gender differences are related to the acceptance of social support. The female gender in this study shows that emotional support is what they need most when they have mental health problems. This research also shows that female gender is more comfortable getting social support from fellow women. All informants of this study have female friends who are considered able to listen to their complaints and provide emotional support. Men tend not to listen compared to women. This is consistent with Reevy and Maslach's (2001) research which found that women also consistently sought emotional support compared to men who were more suited to tangible support.

Poerwandari (2005) provides 3 explanations regarding this. Biological Explanation says that men tend to care less than women because of biological factors such as hormones. In addition, biological similarities also make women more comfortable sharing about their biological conditions. The informant who has physical health problems in this study tends to be more comfortable discussing her condition with fellow women who are considered to have the same biological condition with her. Social Explanation sees gender as having an influence on social construction from birth. In this study, female informants tended to prioritize emotional support over material support. Women only want to be listened to, even if there is no support for a solution, so that female informants feel that only those with a feminine female gender can understand their situation. Interactional Explanation, expresses the relation between biology and social function. In this research it can be said that female

informants, especially informants with health problems, feel they have to seek social support from other places, such as the internet and do not interfere with the lives of others with their problems. She felt women should not interfere with others and be able to face their own problems in silence. She seconded herself. This is related to the biological condition that is in trouble and she relates it to her social function as only the number 2 party in life.

The explanation above shows that women basically prioritize emotional support compared to other forms of support. In addition, women also need social support from fellow women and according to previous research, what women need in social support is support to love themselves, increase self-esteem and confidence in dealing with life's problems.

## CONCLUSSION

Based on discussion and findings, there are two receptions appear in this study, namely dominant-reading and negotiate-reading. Dominant-readers in this study accept the entire contents of @gethapy.id instagramaccount as an online social support which are useful for them. Negotiate-reader accepts some of the content of the @gethapy.id account as a form of social support, but rejects some others. Followers with physical health problems tend to need more support from online social support because it can be accessed at any time, while followers without health problems tend to see online social support as a reminder and become an alternative to friends and family. This study identified peer and online social support tend to provide emotional support, while families tend to provide material/instrumental support. This study stated peer and family still become prime social support in life, while online social support is an alternative and additional agent of social support. This study found that women tend to be more comfortable with emotional support and get social support from fellow women.

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