

Digital Footprints and Family Harmony in the Village: Use of Social Media in Kedai Damar Village, Tebing Tinggi, Serdang Bedagai

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Abstract: This research aims to investigate digital footprints and their impact on family harmony in the village. Through a qualitative approach, data was collected through interviews and observations of families in the village. Data was collected by observation and interviews. The informants for this research were 10 families who met the criteria for the purposive sampling technique. The research results stated that families in Kedai Damar Village use social media to make their daily lives easier. The social media they use are WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube. Results showed that social media use had a complex impact on family dynamics, with 7 families finding improvements in interpersonal communication and connections, while 3 others faced the challenge of finding the right proportion of social media use to avoid conflict. The implications of the research emphasize the importance of understanding the role of social media in shaping family life in rural areas, as well as designing strategies that support healthy use and have a positive impact on family harmony.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki jejak digital dan pengaruhnya terhadap keharmonisan keluarga di desa tersebut. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan observasi terhadap keluarga di desa tersebut. Data dikumpulkan dengan cara observasi dan wawancara. Informan penelitian ini adalah 10 keluarga yang memenuhi kriteria teknik purposive sampling. Hasil penelitian menyatakan keluarga di Desa Kedai Damar menggunakan media sosial untuk mempermudah kehidupan sehari-hari mereka. Media sosial yang mereka pakai yaitu whatsapp, facebook, instagram, tiktok dan youtube. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media sosial memiliki dampak yang kompleks terhadap dinamika keluarga, dengan 7 keluarga menemukan peningkatan dalam komunikasi dan koneksi interpersonal, sementara yang 3 lain menghadapi tantangan untuk menemukan proporsi penggunaan media sosial yang tepat agar tidak terjadi konflik. Implikasi penelitian menekankan pentingnya memahami peran media sosial dalam membentuk kehidupan keluarga di pedesaan, serta merancang strategi yang mendukung penggunaan yang sehat dan berdampak positif bagi keharmonisan keluarga.

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INTRODUCTION

In many countries, the digitalization phenomenon has become an important factor in social and economic transformation. However, there are villages that are left behind in this flow, for various reasons such as limited infrastructure, lack of accessibility, or even reluctance towards modern technology. (Muda & Suharyanto, 2020) Kedai Village, Tebing Tinggi District, initially did not have proper internet access, because it is located in rural or inland areas, far from urban centers and adequate internet accessibility. Underdeveloped infrastructure, including slow internet connections, can be a major barrier to these rural residents engaging in social media or other digital technologies. Apart from infrastructure problems, there are also social and cultural factors that influence the use of social media in Kedai village. Some rural communities may have an aversion to new technologies for security or privacy reasons, or perhaps because traditional values place more emphasis on direct social interaction. As a result, this village can be said to have experienced lagging behind in various aspects, including access to information, economic opportunities, and connectivity with the outside world.

Currently, Kedai Village already has sufficient internet access. This village has been connected to the internet and experienced significant transformation in various aspects of life, including family dynamics. In this digital era, internet access has become an important factor in facilitating communication, information exchange and global connectivity. Ultimately, in Kedai villages that are connected to the internet, families have easier access to communicate with family members who are in other places via social media, messaging applications, or video calls. This allows them to stay emotionally connected despite being in different locations, increasing harmony in family relationships.

Not using social media can then affect relationships between family members. In an environment where social media is a primary channel for sharing information, communicating, and building relationships, families who are not engaged on these platforms may feel cut off from the flow of information and opportunities to engage in important conversations. In addition, disharmony in the family can be influenced by feelings of imbalance between family members who use social media and those who do not. This can create gaps in understanding, interests and daily activities, which in turn can disrupt relationships between family members. (Lilis Karwati, Wiwin Herwina, Ahmad Hamdan, 2020)

Meanwhile in Kedai Village, social media can help strengthen relationships between family members and create harmony. However, in other cases, excessive or unhealthy use of social media

can cause conflict and disharmony. (Dodi, 2023) On the positive side, social media can be a powerful tool for sharing moments of daily life, supporting each other, and strengthening emotional ties between family members who are separated by distance. Healthy use of social media can also open the door to more open and in-depth communication between family members. However, too much time spent on social media or engaging in negative behaviors such as social comparison or cyberbullying can also damage family relationships. For example, social media addiction can lead to a lack of direct interaction between family members, disrupting quality time together, and causing intergenerational conflict. Therefore, it is important for families to have a healthy balance in social media use. Developing awareness of its positive and negative impacts, setting healthy time boundaries, and communicating openly about hopes and concerns related to social media can help families create a supportive, harmonious, and emotionally connected environment. This is the aim of this research, to find the use of social media related to creating harmonious families in Kedai Village.

Humans as social creatures communicate and influence other people in various ways. Communication is the process of sending, receiving or processing messages that have a certain influence to obtain feedback (Simon & Alouini, 2004). In other words, communication influences people's lives. A human relationship cannot exist without communication, such as communication between individuals, groups, communities and families. Communication is the delivery of messages by the communicator to the communicant to express attitudes, opinions, thoughts or behavior, either verbally or indirectly through the media (Simon & Alouini, 2004). All relationships rely heavily on communication. The relationship between parents and children, individual relationships with groups and individual relationships with families. Family is the most important place to build and shape a child's character. Parents' communication with their children has a high position as a guide and formation of children's patterns and behavior (Oxianus Sabarua & Mornene, 2020).

A family is a group of people consisting of several individuals who are related by blood. The family consists of a husband and wife, which is called a small family, and an extended family consisting of grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, children and grandchildren. The family is also the first place for a child to learn about his interactions with his family, which is easily called family communication. Family communication is communication that occurs within a family. Every time someone (father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, brother, or sister) gives or receives a gift, or when someone acts as the recipient of a gift, family communication can occur. The information provided may be facts, opinions, or requests for funding. Each family's unique

communication style requires a balance of two people with different personalities, values, strengths, beliefs, and actions (Kaddi, Lestari, & Adrian, 2020). Communication between family members is one way to get comments or responses from other family members. Family communication itself is an example of interpersonal communication relationships. Family communication is one of the means of creating a child's attitude and character which becomes a provision for his social life. Family communication has a role in teaching, influencing and providing guidance. However, family communication does have a purpose, creating interaction between one family member and another family which creates closeness within a family. Family communication can be made easier by using social media.

Internet-based social media connects users all over the world. There are 4.66 million active internet users and 4.32 million active mobile internet users in January 2024, 2.2 million active social media users, 4.15 million active mobile social media users, and 4.2 million active mobile internet users (Johnson, 2021). One common expression that is spread across all generations is social media. Activities that were previously carried out conventionally face-to-face can now be carried out virtually, either synchronously or asynchronously, via social media. Social media refers to online media that operates through internet connections and web-based technologies, allowing users to easily access and share information through blogs, social media platforms, wikis, forums and other virtual worlds. One form of social media that is most widely read by the general public throughout the world is blogs and social media. (Putra, 2017)

Social media is another type of online media that facilitates people to engage with each other and uses web-based technology to turn text into interactive discussions. Judging from its history, contemporary society has always communicated through silence or sound, starting with Johann Gutenberg's rejection of the printing press and continuing to the present through social media interactions. In 1969, the United States Department of Defense's Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) conducted research on how to connect fifteen computers to form an internet network which was later called ARPANET. This was the first time the internet was used. With the emergence of extensive computer networks in the 1970s, more than ten computers were able to exchange data with each other in real time (Awaliyah, Dewi, & Furnamasari, 2021). From that time until now, social media has become the main source for people all over the world who use it. Social media that allows users to participate, share, and create content such as blogs and social circles, there is another definition which states that online media that allows social interaction and social media that disseminates web-based communication into interactive dialogue.

Communication has also become easier thanks to technology which has caused major changes in globalization. One trend that is currently developing is social media. Social media is a website used to share information (Suryaningsih, 2020). Another opinion also states that social media is a tool or means that allows users to communicate, collaborate and share information with other users on social networks virtually (Fitriani, 2021). According to data from the survey results of the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) for the 2022 - 2023 period, there are 215.63 million active social media users. This number is equivalent to 78.19% of the 275.77 million people in Indonesia. This number is greater than in the 2021-2022 survey where social media users were only 77.02%. This data proves that social media users have increased by 1.17% in Indonesia (Kandau & Munawaroh, 2023). The social media that is often used to support communication between people and families at this time according to Databook.com is WhatsApp at 84%, followed by Facebook at 79% followed by Instagram at 79% (Junawan & Laugu, 2020).

In previous research by Tongkotow Liedfray et al (2022), it was stated that social media really plays an important role in strengthening interactions between village families, as evidenced by the existence of social media for families to interact more easily, share information, as a means of learning and supporting each other as well as means of control between family members in Esandom Village.

Based on previous research, there are differences between this research and previous research. The difference with previous research is that social media does not have a completely positive impact in strengthening family relationships, because social media also has a bad impact, causing a reduction in direct family communication, which can worsen good relationships between family members. In this case, the researcher gave advice to families in Kedai Damar village, especially teenagers, to be able to use social media wisely, to be able to use social media less and to communicate more often with their families directly to create a harmonious family. And for parents to be able to control their children when playing on social media, don't let their children drift into the virtual world which has a negative impact on their children's communication development in their daily lives.

The use of social media today is very diverse, from children, teenagers to adults, all use social media in their daily lives. The use of social media in the family has a positive impact, namely as a means of making it easier to communicate and share information as well as a means of learning for children. The negative impact on families is that social media also makes users dependent which disrupts family togetherness. In this case, the researcher wanted to know how social media is used in families in Kedai Damar village. Therefore, the author made his research

with the title social media use in families in Kedai Damar Village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency.

This research uses descriptive methodology with a qualitative approach to examine the problems raised. This method is used to explain or analyze relevant research results with short, concise and clear conclusions (Liedfray, Waani, & Lasut, 2022). In this study, researchers took 16 informants from 10 families who had a father, mother and 2-4 children who were at least 15 years old. Among them are the families of Mr. Junaidi S, Mr. M Khairul Ilham Lubis and Mr. Supendi's family and 7 other families. These families were selected based on criteria determined through purposive sampling from a total of 549 families in Kedai Village. The data collection techniques used by researchers to collect data are by using observation and interviews. During the interview, researchers asked informants a number of questions regarding the use of social media in their families. Through observation, researchers observed the use of social media in Kedai Damar village families. Researchers also use the Miles and Huberman model of data analysis techniques, namely researchers use data filtering techniques, data presentation, and verification of results or conclusions to analyze the data. Researchers also use data triangulation techniques, namely source triangulation by combining interview and observation data to ensure the authenticity of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before the existence of internet-based communication social media, families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi subdistrict, Serdang Bedagai district looked for information using print media such as newspapers, magazines and usually communicated using letters. Apart from correspondence activities, families in Kedai Damar village are also accustomed to using landlines and mobile phones to communicate with each other. However, before the advent of social media, families communicated more often directly compared to today's social media. After the widespread presence of internet-based social media, many families in Kedai Damar village began to use social media in their daily lives. Starting from children, teenagers to adults, they use social media for their own needs. The types of social media that are widely used in Kedai Damar village are Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and Youtube.

Whatsapp or what is often called WA is an internet-based social media that is most widely used by families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. All

informants said clearly that they all use WhatsApp for the common good. They use WhatsApp to communicate, exchange information, work and strengthen family relationships. The reason why WhatsApp social media is widely used is because it has features that are easy and simple to use. Apart from that, WhatsApp social media is widely used among Indonesian people to send messages, make voice calls and also make video calls. WhatsApp is an internet-based social media that focuses on chat services. Before the presence of WhatsApp, families used short message service (SMS) as their chat service. However, currently the SMS chat service has been replaced by WhatsApp for several reasons. The reasons why many people use WhatsApp according to Jiyaad Sabig in his article are the advantages and disadvantages and reasons for using WhatsApp: 1). The interface is simple, easy to understand and uses little internet data, 2). Free SMS replacement, 3). Connect with the contact number on your cellphone, 4). Uses little phone storage 5). Non-paid and ad-free application, 6). Privacy is maintained safely from pretas, 7). Vidcall is more stable, 8). Not social media for "nosy" or "Stalking". It can be said that this is the reason why there is so much use of WhatsApp social media in Indonesia, especially in the families of Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, to make WhatsApp one of the internet-based social media to make their daily lives easier.

The second social media, namely Facebook or what is often called FB, is the second most used internet-based social media in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. Of the 16 informants, 13 informants used Facebook as their social media. A total of 6 informants in the first and second families used Facebook social media and 1 informant in the third family used Facebook social media in their daily lives. They use Facebook as a means of entertainment, communicating with family and friends, looking for information and as a means of buying and selling goods. The reason Facebook is widely used is because it is simple to use. Informants said that Facebook is a social media that can make it easier to find friends and find old friends who may be far from them. That's why until now they still use Facebook as their internet-based social media. Facebook is an internet-based social media that is used for various social networks. Facebook social media focuses on making it easier for users to build relationships and share information in the virtual world. Facebook also provides a feature so that its users can add profiles with photos, contact numbers or personal information to other Facebook users. It can be said that this interesting feature is what makes the people of Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, use Facebook as one of their social media.

The third social media, namely Instagram or often called IG, is the third most used internet-based social media in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai

Regency. Of the 16 informants, 9 informants used Instagram as their social media. A total of 3 informants from the first family, 4 informants from the second family and 2 informants from the third family used Instagram social media. They use Instagram as a means of seeking information, communication and entertainment. Instagram social media is generally used by young people and teenagers. That's why teenagers choose Instagram as their social media to communicate, look for information about a product, look for information about famous celebrities, look for information about the latest films and so on. Instagram is an internet-based social media that is used as a photo sharing application. Instagram social media focuses on making it easier for users to take photos, apply digital filters, and share them on their social media accounts. Instagram also provides a chat feature to its users to make it easier to communicate with their friends, friends and family. Because the use of Instagram social media is generally by teenagers, the use of Instagram social media in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency is only limited to teenagers.

The fourth social media is Tiktok. Tiktok is an internet-based social media that is also used by families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. Of the 16 informants, 5 informants used TikTok as a form of social media. A total of 3 informants from the second family and 2 informants from the third family used TikTok social media. Teenagers generally use TikTok social media in Kedai Damar Village, they use TikTok as a means to view short videos, create content and share it as well as a means of online shopping. Not only that, some informants also said that they use TikTok as a means of seeking information, motivation and sharing information by using short videos which make users not bored of watching or listening to them. Tiktok is an internet-based social media that is used as a leading place for sharing mobile short videos. TikTok social media focuses on making it easier for users to create short videos and upload them as a tool to inspire users' creativity in today's digital world. It doesn't stop there, TikTok also provides shopping and chatting features in their application. This makes teenagers in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency take part in presenting their creativity, knowledge and moments in everyday life so that they can be seen among TikTok social media users around the world.

The last social media is YouTube. YouTube is a social media that is not widely used by families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. Of the 16 informants, only 2 informants in the second family used YouTube as their social media. YouTube social media is used by Kedai Damar Village teenagers as a means of listening to music, looking for information and entertainment in their spare time. YouTube is an internet-based social media

that focuses on sharing videos. YouTube is a social media that users use as a means to upload videos and share them so that everyone can see them (Tinambunan & Siahaan, 2022). The ease of accessing YouTube social media is an advantage for its users, by using an Android (smart phone), laptop and computer we can easily access it anywhere and anytime as long as there is internet nearby (Nursobah, Pgmi, Tarbiyah, & Madura, 2021).

The use of social media is very important in everyday life. Starting from children, teenagers to adults, the name social media cannot be separated from it. Social media itself is used by all groups, from upper, middle to middle economic families to lower middle economic families; high and low educated families; families in cities and villages; everyone plays social media. (Putra et al., n.d.) The use of social media used by families in Kedai Damar Village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency has an impact on its users in their daily lives. According to the informants, there are positive and negative impacts resulting from the presence of social media. In accordance with the information provided by the informant, there are four positive impacts resulting from the use of social media, namely: 1). Speed up getting information, 2). Makes work easier, 3). Helps in seeking knowledge, 4). Strengthen relationships with friends and family. Apart from the positive impacts, there are negative impacts caused by the use of social media. According to the informants, there are 7 negative impacts caused by social media, namely: 1). A lot of time is wasted playing on social media, 2). Easy access to commit fraud, 3). Faster spread of fake news (Hoax), 4). Abandoned work, 5). Lazy to do activities, 6). Cyber bullying and 7). Increased expenses for purchasing internet packages.

In this case, families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency also use social media to build good relationships with each other, friends, especially their own family. The informants said that there were several good and bad impacts caused by the presence of social media in each informant's family in their daily lives. The good impact of using social media in the family in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, is that it makes communication within the family easier, makes it easier to share information within the family and makes learning easier in the family. And the bad impact is reduced direct family communication.

Social media can make communication within the family easier. Social media is used by families as a means of communicating with distant relatives. Social media such as WA, FB and IG provide video calling features that make it easy for families to let go of longing for distant relatives who are working or studying. Parents can easily contact their children and vice versa, which makes communication within the family run harmoniously without any obstacles that hinder communication between parents and children. The informant also said that with social media it is easier for us to monitor our children who are far along in their education.

Not only as a communication tool, social media is also used by families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency as a tool to share information within the family. Informants said that social media such as FB, TikTok and YouTube were useful in digging up the latest and hottest information that was happening, unlike in the past where you had to wait for newspapers to appear first to get information. WA and IG also help make it easier to provide information to distant families quickly, unlike in the past where letters had to be sent by

post and they arrived over a long period of time. Social media which can provide fast information can be used as a means of strengthening family relationships. The informant explained that with the existence of social communication media such as WA, FB and IG, information about children who are far away can quickly reach us as parents, and we as parents can quickly take action regarding what happens to our children who are far from us. . With social media quickly providing information, we as parents are not worried about sending our children to school far from our supervision. In this case, distance is not an obstacle in strengthening our relationship as parents and children.

Social media is also used by families as a tool in learning. Like YouTube and TikTok, which provide many learning videos that children can watch as a learning tool. In this case, parental participation is very important in the child's learning process, besides that there is also closeness between parents and children which makes the family closer and more harmonious. The informant explained that with the existence of social media such as YouTube and TikTok, it is easier for us as parents to teach our children about what they want to know. Thus, social media makes relationships between family members closer and closer in any situation or condition.

Apart from the many good impacts that social media has on families, there is also a bad impact of social media on families in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, namely reduced direct family communication. In this case, social media has a bad impact, namely making users get lost in their respective social media. Makes families have fun with their own social media without paying attention to their surroundings. The informant explained that with social media, family members became engrossed in their own virtual world. For example, when families hold events such as family gatherings, children, especially teenagers, prefer to be alone in their rooms and play on social media rather than meeting their families. That is a small example of the negative impact of social media in the family. It can be concluded that apart from having a good impact, social media also has a bad impact on family members in Kedai Damar village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency.

CONCLUSION

Results showed that social media use had a complex impact on family dynamics, with 7 families finding improvements in interpersonal communication and connections, while 3 others faced the challenge of finding the right proportion of social media use to avoid conflict. The implications of the research emphasize the importance of understanding the role of social media in shaping family life in rural areas, as well as designing strategies that support healthy use and have a positive impact on family harmony.

Social media users in Kedai Damar Village, Tebing Tinggi District, Serdang Bedagai Regency are very diverse, ranging from children, teenagers to adults. The types of social media used by families in Kedai Damar Village include Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and YouTube. They use social media to make work easier, to make sharing information and communication easier and also as a means of entertainment to make work easier, to make sharing information and communication easier and also as a means of entertainment in their spare time. It doesn't stop there, they also use social media as a means for buying and selling goods online.

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