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# The Influence of Covid-19 Information on Whatsapp Social Media Towards Community Anxiety Level

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**A B S T R A C T**

Many people in the Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing communities are concerned about the COVID-19 information spread via the WhatsApp group social media. The goal of this study was to see how exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp affected anxiety levels in the hamlet and housing communities, as well as to look at how exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp affected anxiety levels in the communities. The Uses and Gratification Theory, Information Exposure Theory, Anxiety Theory, and Individual Difference Theory are all investigated in this study. The quantitative research method was applied, with each sample area consisting of 100 participants. All of the ideas employed in this study were evaluated on the designated population, according to the findings. The findings of the hypothesis 1 test show that the greater the exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp, the higher the residents of Sorogenen Padukuhan's anxiety level. Hypothesis 2 was tested, claiming that the higher the level of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media, the higher the level of anxiety among Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents; and hypothesis 3 was tested, claiming that there is a difference in the effect of COVID-19 information on the people of the communities, but no difference in the level of anxiety among these residents. This research provides scientific contributions in the form of indicators of critical thinking to strengthen active audiences on Uses and Gratification Theory and intensity indicators on Information Exposure Theory.



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## INTRODUCTION

Technology and information continue to advance, with the birth of the internet being one example. The use of digital media is directly proportionate to the development of the internet in Indonesia. According to the results of a 2020 survey conducted by We Are Social, Indonesia had 175.4 million internet users out of a total population of 272.1 million. According to the statistics, 160 million people (59 percent) utilize social media and 338.2 million people use mobile phones. The average daily internet usage is 7 hours 59 minutes, with 3 hours 26 minutes spent on social media. The most widely used social media by Indonesians is Youtube (88%), Whatsapp (84%), Facebook (82%), Instagram (79%) (Datareportal.com, 2020). This fact is also in accordance with the results of research conducted by Maulida, W, dan Nugrahenti (2020) which found that the social media used by the Indonesian people are YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.

This shows that the public's need to obtain information is increasing. People consciously that the need to get information is the power to show the intensity of the need for information (Simanjuntak, 2011), thus leading to the information society (Rodin, 2013). The information society is a society that has fully used information and communication technology to become an important element in life (Priatna, 2018), for example the use of social media to find information. Change in communication methods creates a new challenge for the community (Irwan dan Novianti, 2021).

The internet, which is facilitated by gadgets, can allow everyone to produce communication messages according to their advantage. That means that currently, anyone can share any communication messages to any community, including sharing communication messages that are not supported by data and facts that are often referred to as hoaxes (Wibowo, 2020). Social media is the latest development of internet-based website development technology (Hanafi, 2016), which makes it easy for everyone to communicate with each other, participate, share, form an online network and can share content independently (Purawinangun dan Yusuf, 2020). Social media is open and democratic so that it can become a bridge for various communities to interact quickly (Wijaya, 2012). Social media, which is supported by the internet network, makes it easy for its users to find and share information, connect with each other every time as if there is no distance between space and time.

The use of social media by the wider community to find, produce and disseminate information can have various impacts, both positive and negative. One of them is related to the spread of various messages, information about the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), which is currently the attention of many parties. The COVID-19 disease is transmitted from one person to another that attacks the acute respiratory system, causing coughing or shortness of breath, fever (Kaddi, Lestari, & Adrian, 2020; Susilo et al., 2020). The outbreak that quickly developed into a global pandemic originated in Wuhan, China in December 2019 (Zhong, Guo, & Chen, 2020).

Indonesia reported its first COVID-19 case on March 2, 2020 (Adiputra, 2020). The government has implemented three strategies to deal with



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the spread of COVID-19 in terms of health, namely in the form of promotive (improvement), preventive (preventing), and curative (healing) (Wahidah, Septiadi, Rafqie, Hartono, & Athallah, 2020). The Indonesian government has also implemented various policies to prevent the transmission of COVID-19, one of which is the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), by urging the public to maintain a minimum distance of two meters from each other, avoid direct contact with other people, and stay at home. If not, have interest and wear a mask. These restrictions are expected to help reduce or even break the COVID-19 chain (Tawai, Suharyanto, Putranto, De Guzman, & Prastowo, 2021). The existence of large-scale restrictions during this COVID-19 pandemic has caused economic, industrial and business losses at all levels of life (Caraka et al., 2020).

One of the ways to handle the COVID-19 pandemic is to maintain information transactions. The amount of information regarding COVID-19 causes misinformation. Whereas the information received by the public (public) also influences perceptions of the risks and threats of COVID-19 (Sandell, Sebar, & Harris, 2013). With the abundance of information about COVID-19, it could potentially lead to an infodemic, making it difficult to distinguish between true and false information (Tangcharoensathien et al., 2020).

The amount of exposure to information about COVID-19 has caused anxiety in the community. This news can cause anxiety in the community. This anxiety is almost similar to the feeling of fear, except that the focus of anxiety is less specific. Unlike the case with fear that responds directly to several threats. Anxiety is characterized by worrying about unexpected dangers in the future. Anxiety can be said to be a negative emotional state characterized by premonitions and somatic symptoms (heart palpitations, sweating, shaking, etc.) (Annisa & Ifdil, 2016).

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) survey on media coverage affects the level of public concern, showing the results that the majority of respondents are worried, even very worried about the condition and news coverage of COVID-19 (Pratama & Herieningsih, 2020). These results confirm that the news is a factor that triggers anxiety that occurs in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the news or spread of COVID-19 information comes from social media, especially WhatsApp groups. Anxiety as a result of COVID-19 information spread through WhatsApp was experienced by Sorogenen Village residents and RW 69 Mitra Griya Asri Housing (MGA) residents.

The results of research from Kuchler, Russel, dan Stroebel (2020) which state that the spread of COVID-19 information between regions is very fast through social networks. The widely circulated COVID-19 information was quickly received through WhatsApp groups, without being matched by a willingness to confirm the truth of the news spread on social networks, WhatsApp groups, causing the spread of hoaxes among PKK RW 69 MGA Housing women. The same thing also happened in the neighborhood of Sorogenen hamlet. Most residents who have smartphones with various social media can easily find, receive, and



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spread information about COVID-19. This makes people anxious and panicked, especially for COVID-19 survivors.

This study examines the Media Effect Theory, namely Uses and Gratification by Herbert Blumer and Elihu Katz, which assumes that media information has a certain effect on its users. The assumption in this theory says that the use (uses) of media information to satisfy the needs (gratification) of society (Rohmah, 2020). This theory is used considering that during the pandemic the community was hit by information related to COVID-19 through WhatsApp groups. In addition to the Uses and Gratification theory, the researcher tested Rosengrenn's Information Exposure Theory. In this theory, the audience is actively seeking information. Information search is also adjusted to the characteristics of the community based on gender and user area as stated in the Individual Differences Theory by Melvin D. Defleur (Triyaningsih, 2020). Information related to COVID-19 that is spread on social media, one of which is WhatsApp groups is continuously accepted by the public, which can make readers experience changes in their perceptions, ways of thinking and behavior regarding the pandemic. Exposure is an intense condition that occurs in audiences who receive messages from the mass media so that they obtain extensive information and knowledge. Exposure to information by the media can encourage symbolic awareness, from symbolic awareness to consumptive awareness, then consumptive awareness to grow actual awareness or behavior (Ayuningtyas, Dh, and Nuralam, 2019). Exposure can be measured through three dimensions (Rizki and Pangestuti, 2017), namely: 1) Frequency, which is related to how many times or how often someone uses the media and consumes messages from the media; 2) Duration, related to how long someone uses and consumes the content of media messages; 3) Attention, which is about the level of attention given by someone in using and consuming the message content of the media used.

In this study, three dimensions were used to measure the effect of exposure to COVID-19 information. The first dimension is frequency, which is used to measure how often residents of Sorogenen and Perum MGA use WhatsApp social media, obtain information about COVID-19 from WhatsApp, and how many citizens receive information from WhatsApp. The second dimension is duration, which measures how long residents use WhatsApp to get COVID-19 information and how long it takes Sorogenen residents and MGA housing companies to view COVID-19 information from WhatsApp. The last dimension is the dimension of attention, which measures how much people are interested in reading COVID-19 information circulating on WhatsApp, how well people understand the COVID-19 information they receive, and the actions taken after residents receive COVID-19 information from WhatsApp social media.

A person's actions are determined by attitudes although attitudes do not necessarily manifest in the form of actions. Attitude has three (3) components (Tjandra & Tjandra, 2013), namely, 1) Cognitive component, which involves one's beliefs, perceptions, and



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views; 2) Affective component, which is related to a person's emotions (feelings or emotions) that can form a positive or negative attitude towards an object; and 3) Kontif component, which is related to behaving or acting in accordance with his attitude. Of the three components, the affective component is the basis of attitudes, because these components can be an influence that can change attitudes (Gusviani, 2017; Zuchdi, 1995).

One of the effects of receiving information or messages is the emergence of feelings of anxiety related to the effects of attitudes or behavior (Ayuningtias, 2013). Anxiety can happen and be experienced by everyone. Anxiety is an unpleasant inner state evidenced by feelings of depression, discomfort, confusion, and worry (Yanti, Erlamsyah, Zikra, & Ardi, 2013). Anxiety can appear alone or simultaneously with other symptoms caused by emotional disturbances that occur (Jendra dan Sugiyo, 2020).

Anxiety describes a brief period of fear or nervousness during a difficult experience that causes discomfort, tension, restlessness, insecurity and restlessness. Anxiety is called anxious or worried, namely fear that is not clear but feels very strong, accompanied by physical sensations such as tension, restlessness, sweaty palms, difficulty breathing, dizziness, flushed cheeks and increased heart rate. Anxiety has four aspects (Greenberger & Padesky, 2004), namely: 1) Physical reactions (physical symptoms); 2) Thought (thought); 3) Behavior (behavior); and 4) Mood (feelings).

These four aspects were used to measure the anxiety felt by residents of Sorogenen Hamlet and Mitra Griya Asri housing after receiving information about COVID-19 from WhatsApp social media. The physical reaction aspect is used to determine the anxiety that arises in residents after receiving information on COVID-19 through WhatsApp social media. The aspect of thinking that is seen is about whether residents are affected by the COVID-19 information they receive, whether negative thoughts arise from citizens regarding the information they receive, also from the information received that makes residents know more about COVID-19 or vice versa. In the behavioral aspect, it can measure what actions were taken by the Sorogenen hamlet and Mitra Griya Asri housing after receiving information about COVID-19. The mood aspect is used to measure how residents feel (fear, alert, irritated, cautious), after receiving information related to COVID-19.

The hypothesis of this research, namely,

H0: There is no effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village Sleman community.

Ha: There is an effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village community.

H0: There is no effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the housing community of Mitra Griya Asri.

Ha: There is an effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Mitra Griya Asri Housing community

H0: There is no difference in the effect of exposure to COVID-19



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information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in Sorogenen Village Sleman community and Mitra Griya Asri Housing.community

Ha: There is an effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in Sorogenen Village Sleman and Mitra Griya Asri Housing.

This study aims to determine the effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the padukuhan and housing communities, and to examine the different effects of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village community and Mitra Griya Asri Housing RW 69 Wedomartani Sleman.

## METHODOLOGY

The research uses quantitative methods with a descriptive approach. The subjects of this study were residents who lived in the Sorogenen Village, Sleman Yogyakarta and Mitra Griya Asri Housing (MGA) RW 69 Wedomartani Sleman. The object of research is the effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety of Sorogenen residents and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents.

The population of this research is Mitra Griya Asri RW 69 Housing residents with 125 people and Sorogenen Village residents with 133 people. The sampling technique was carried out by System Random Sampling or randomly using the Yamane, Isaac, and Michael formula (Sugiyono & Lestari, 2021):

$$n = \frac{133}{1 + 133\ (0{,}05)^2} = 99{,}81$$

The population is 125 and 133 people with a sampling error of 5% so that each sample area is rounded up by 100 people. This study uses the concept of Social Media Information Exposure (Rosengrenn) and Communication Anxiety Levels (Greenberger Padesky). From these two concepts, two research variables were taken from WhatsApp Group Social Media Information Exposure and Anxiety Levels of the Sorogenen Village residents and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents. Information Exposure Variables have indicators of frequency, duration, and attention. Anxiety Level variable consists of indicators of physical symptoms, thoughts, behavior, and feelings.

All indicators are used as the basis for compiling an online questionnaire via Google Form for data collection. The questionnaire in this study used a Linkert scale of 1-4 with details Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4). Before the questionnaire was distributed, it was tested for validity and reliability. This research validity which shows that most of the questions are valid, then there are 3 questions that are not valid, and these questions are not included in the calculation of data reliability. The reliability of this study obtained a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.852 while the Y variable obtained a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.717, so it can be concluded that the X and Y variables



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are reliable to be used as research instruments.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the SPSS version 26 statistical calculation applications for simple linear regression to test hypotheses (1) and (2). The Simple Linear Regression Test has the requirements of the Normality test and linearity test in this study and has been carried out, the test results meet the requirements. Testing hypothesis 3 using Chi Square to find out the difference in the effect of variable X on Y in village and housing communities.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study examined the effect of the news on the anxiety level of Sorogenen Village residents and residents of Mitra Griya Asri housing. From the results of the distribution of questionnaires, data obtained by gender in Sorogenen are 28 men and 72 women, while 37 men and 63 women in Mitra Griya Asri Housing.

### Hypothesis Test Results 1

From the 100 respondents who confirmed the statements on the information exposure questionnaire and the level of anxiety in Sorogenen hamlet, it can be seen in Figure 1.

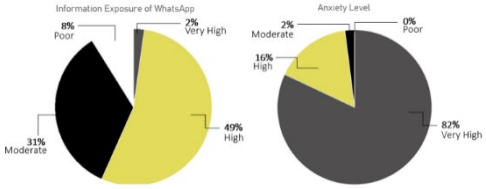


Figure 1 Questionnaire on Information Exposure and Anxiety Levels in Sorogenen Village

Source: Research Results (2021)

Figure 1 shows that the frequency of WhatsApp Group information exposure during the COVID-19 period is very intense, at 12% which is very high, 49% is high. This shows that WhatsApp Group is a tool that is often used to share information related to COVID-19. The level of anxiety in Sorogenen hamlet residents is 82%, which shows that the community's anxiety level against COVID-19 is very high.

A Simple linear regression test was conducted to find the effect between the two variables. Results The results of data analysis from a simple linear regression test can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Results of Simple Linear Regression Equations

**Coefficients[a]**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 29.890 | 2.264 | | 13.201 | .000 | | |
| | exposure to news whatsapp | 299 | .059 | .455 | 5.063 | .000 | 1.000 | 1.000 |

a. Dependent Variable: anxiety level

Source: Research Results (2021)

Based on Table 1, a simple linear regression equation is



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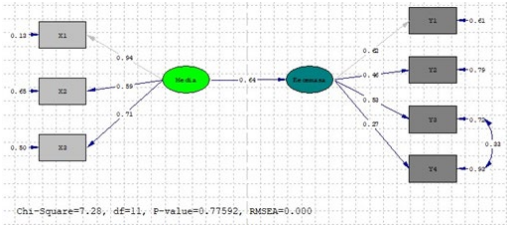
obtained, namely Y = 29.890 β + 0.299 X. The regression equation has meaning, namely, First, Constant = 29.890 shows that if the variable exposure to WhatsApp social media coverage is considered zero, then the variable anxiety level results are 29.890. Second, the coefficient X = 0.299 shows that if the variable exposure to WhatsApp media coverage has increased by one point, it causes an increase in the anxiety level of Sorogenen residents by 0.299. The results of hypothesis also testing show that with a confidence level = 95% or (α) = 0.05, degrees of freedom (df) = n-k-l = 100-1-1 = 98, $f^{table}$ = 1.984 is obtained. The results of data analysis Table 1 shows the value of $t^{count}$ = 5.063 > 1.984 = $t^{table}$, and sig = 0.000 <5%, so $H^0$ is rejected. This means that the variable exposure to news on WhatsApp social media has a significant effect on the anxiety level of Sorogenen Village residents.

In Table 1, it is obtained that the value of R2 = 0.207 = 20.7% is the independent variable. Exposure to news on WhatsApp Group social media has an influence on the dependent variable, the anxiety level of Sorogenen residents by 20.7% and the remaining 79.3% are other variables that are not included in this research. In this study, several indicators influence each other through the test results of the Sem model and the FIT sem model for reanalysis of research data. The effect of the Sem model is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Model of Sem and Fitsem

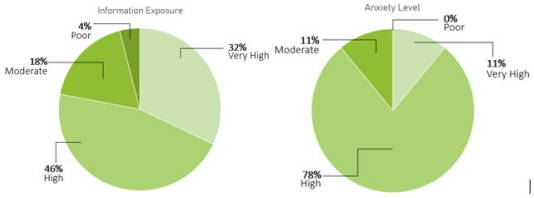



Source: Research Results (2021)

**Hypothesis Test Results 2**

Of the 100 respondents who confirmed the statements on the information exposure questionnaire and the level of anxiety, it can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Questionnaire on Information Exposure and Anxiety Levels for Griya Asri Partners Housing




Source: Research Results (2021)

Figure 3 shows that WhatsApp Group Information Exposure during the COVID-19 pandemic has a very intense frequency, which is very high at 32% and high at 46%. This shows that WhatsApp Group is a tool that is often used to share information related to COVID-19. The level of anxiety is at a high level of 78%, this shows that the level of anxiety of the Mitra Griya Asri housing community about COVID-19 is very high.

The simple linear regression equation shows that the value of t



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count is 3.288 > 1.984 t. At a significance level of 0.05, it can be concluded that there is an effect of exposure to WhatsApp Group information on the level of anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the t value, it can also be seen from the significance value of Information Exposure, which is 0.001 < 0.05. The magnitude of the effect can be seen by looking at the value of R Square on the SPSS 24.0 output in Table 2.

Table 2 Summary Model of Information Exposure to Community Anxiety Levels for Mitra Griya Asri Housing

**Model Summary[b]**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .315[a] | .099 | .090 | 4.00021 | .099 | 10.811 | 1 | 98 | .001 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Information Exposure
b. Dependent Variable: Anxiety Levels

Source: Researcher Result (2021)

Table 2 shows that the influence of Information Exposure on Anxiety Levels is 9%, and another 91% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. Analysis of the dimensions that have the largest contribution to information exposure and level of anxiety using First Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis with lisrel of 8.50.

**Hypothesis Test Results 3**

The results of hypothesis test 3 to compare the difference in the effect of information exposure and on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village residents and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 MANOVA Test Result

| | Stratifikasi | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Information_Exposure | Housing | **41.0600** | 6.14607 | 1000 |
| | Village | **37.7400** | 6.85730 | 1000 |
| | Total | **39.4000** | 6.70483 | 2000 |
| Anxiety | Housing | **40.7800** | 4.19374 | 1000 |
| | Housing | **41.1700** | 4.50153 | 1000 |
| | Total | **40.9750** | 4.34381 | 2000 |

Source: Researcher Result (2021)

In Table 3 it is known that the average difference in information exposure is significantly different with 41.06 for Mitra Griya Asri housing and 37.74 for Sorogenen Village, compared to the average level of anxiety in Housing and Village is not significantly different with each average. The mean is 40.78 and 41.17. From this description, it can be concluded that the information exposure is quite influential for residents of Housing and Village. The difference in the influence of Sorognen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing can be seen in Table 4.



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Table 4 The Difference of Influence Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing

**Multivariate Tests[b]**

| Effect | | Value | F | Hypothesis df | Error df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | Pillai's Trace | .990 | 9.483E3[a] | 2.000 | 197.000 | .000 |
| | Wilks' Lambda | .010 | 9.483E3[a] | 2.000 | 197.000 | .000 |
| | Hotelling's Trace | 96.274 | 9.483E3[a] | 2.000 | 197.000 | .000 |
| | Roy's Largest Root | 96.274 | 9.483E3[a] | 2.000 | 197.000 | .000 |
| **Stratifikasi** | **Pillai's Trace** | **.083** | **8.924[a]** | **2.000** | **197.000** | **.000** |
| | **Wilks' Lambda** | **.917** | **8.924[a]** | **2.000** | **197.000** | **.000** |
| | **Hotelling's Trace** | **.091** | **8.924[a]** | **2.000** | **197.000** | **.000** |
| | **Roy's Largest Root** | **.091** | **8.924[a]** | **2.000** | **197.000** | **.000** |

a. Exact statistic

b. Design: Intercept + Stratifikasi

Source: Researcher Result (2021)

Table 4 shows that the values of Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace and Roy's Largest Root have a significance level of <0.05 in stratification. This shows that both in Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing, there is a significant difference in the effect of information exposure on the overall level of anxiety. The location of the difference in the influence of the two regions is seen from the exposure to information and the level of anxiety contained in the significance value of information exposure 0.00 < 0.05. This means that the Sorogenen hamlet and Mitra Griya Asri housing-related exposure to information have a significant difference in influence, while the level of anxiety has a significance value of 0.52 > 0.05, indicating that there is no significant effect on the level of anxiety between the community and housing. From the significance of the largest information exposure, it can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5 Pairwise Comparison between Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing

**Pairwise Comparisons**

| Dependent Variable | (I) Stratifikasi | (J) Stratifikasi | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig.[a] | 95% Confidence Interval for Difference[a] | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| **Information_Exposure** | **Housing** | **Village** | **3.320*** | **.921** | **.000** | **1.504** | **5.136** |
| | **Village** | **Housing** | **-3.320*** | **.921** | **.000** | **-5.136** | **-1.504** |
| Anxiety | Housing | Village | -.390 | .615 | .527 | -1.603 | .823 |
| | Village | Housing | -.390 | .615 | .527 | -.823 | 1.603 |

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the ,05 level.

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Source: Researcher Result (2021)

Table 5 shows that exposure to information in Housing and Village has a significance value of 0.00 < 0.05. This shows that both in the hamlet and in the housing, information exposure has a very significant influence.

The results of the hypothesis testing that have been carried out are all tested in accordance with the alternative hypothesis that there is an effect of exposure to COVID-19



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information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen hamlet community, there is an effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Mitra Housing community. Griya Asri, as well as the influence of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village community and Mitra Griya Asri Housing community.

WhatsApp media exposure in Sorogenen Village shows that 49% is considered high. During the pandemic, people can't avoid COVID-19 information circulating in WhatsApp groups. Almost every day there are members who actively disseminate various information such as pictures, story quotes, online news, even statements of a person or group of people, information whose source is clear or whose source is not clear. The community has a high exposure because the frequency of Sorogenen hamlet residents is proven to have the highest access to WhatsApp media. This can be seen in the calculation of the results of the questionnaire and processed data using the SPSS application of 0.94 (Figure 2). Another indicator that shows the high level of information exposure is the attention of Sorogenen residents in accessing WhatsApp groups. Citizens' attention is included in the high category of the calculation of the per-indicator model of information exposure, which is 0.71, compared to the duration of 0.59. The high frequency, attention, and duration are inseparable from the habits of people in the digital era, the majority of whom use WhatsApp for daily communication with other citizens.

The anxiety level of Sorogenen residents is at a very high level, namely 82%. Anxiety level indicators in this study are physical symptoms, namely 0.62, thought is 0.46, behavior is 0.53, and feelings are 0.27. Based on the results of these calculations, Sorogenen Village residents experienced anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in physical symptoms. The physical reaction that appears is that the community immediately responds to the body through their fingers to spread information in the WhatsApp group. After disseminating information, people tend to follow the messages conveyed through the WhatsApp group. Some people do the thinking process in receiving and implementing the information. There are also residents who have feelings of liking or disliking the information that is developing.

The results of this regression test also show that there is an effect of exposure to information from the WhatsApp group in Sorogenen Village on the level of anxiety of the residents by 20.7%, the remaining 79.3% is caused by other factors not examined. This indicates that messages in WhatsApp groups can cause anxiety for residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Citizens' anxiety is understandable due to the large number of messages in WhatsApp groups about COVID-19, so that not all residents respond positively to existing messages, especially messages whose truth and source are not clear. The results of this test indicate that the Media Uses and



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Gratification Effect Theory can be tested on the population of Padukuhan Sorogenen residents. This is in accordance with research conducted by Rohmah (2020) which states that Instagram social media is useful as a user satisfaction to find information related to COVID-19. Village residents actively use WhatsApp media to meet the needs of various information, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding other factors that were not tested, it could be caused by exposure to media other than WhatsApp. This can happen because in the digital era, people have many other social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Line, and other social media (Siagian, Martiwi, & Indra, 2020; Syafwan, Putri, & Handayani, 2021).

This research was also conducted on residents of Mitra Griya Asri housing estate who tested the hypothesis about the effect of WhatsApp media exposure on residents' anxiety levels. Based on the results of the calculation of indicators of information exposure, including high, namely 46%. Information exposure has indicators of attention, duration, and frequency. Attention has the greatest influence on information exposure, then duration and frequency. The attention of residents of Mitra Griya Asri Housing regarding COVID-19 information is shown by the attention of residents who read every message in the WhatsApp group. On average, residents of Mitra Griya Asri Housing use WhatsApp social media for more than 2 hours per day, so WhatsApp is the main media of choice in addition to other social media, and mostly re-shares received COVID-19 information to others. Anxiety level indicators measured in this study consisted of indicators of physical reactions, thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. The anxiety level indicator is at a high level of 78%. This needs to be a concern for WhatsApp media users during the pandemic to reduce the level of anxiety of citizens. The results of the regression test showed a positive and significant effect, namely 9%. The remaining 91% is determined by other variables not tested in this study. The results of research from Purworini (2014) show that people can use television, print mass media or websites. In the digital era, housing residents use social media and other media as a source of information about COVID-19. This is no different from the Padukuhan residents who have a lot of access to other social media besides WhatsApp.

This study also tested a hypothesis that compared the differences in the effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village, Sleman community and Mitra Griya Asri Housing community. The hypothesis has been tested that there is a significant difference in the average information exposure, namely 37.74 for Sorogenen Village and 41.06 for Mitra Griya Asri Housing. Anxiety levels were not significantly different with each average being 41.17 in Sorogenen Village and 40.78 in Mitra Griya Asri Housing. This can be interpreted that the use of WhatsApp media in Mitra Griya Asri Housing is higher than in Sorogenen Village, but the level of



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anxiety is not much different, namely they both experience anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the Media Effect Theory, namely Uses and Gratification, has been tested in both the population of Sorogonen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing. It can be seen that exposure to COVID-19 information has an effect on residents' anxiety levels. This study was corroborated by Bela, Pusporini, Marwiyah, dan Kuntarto (2021) who showed those high levels of fear and anxiety related to information from social media so that it could affect user attitudes and behavior. This proves that the media has a certain impact on the attitudes and behavior of its users. The novelty of this study compared to previous studies tested the Media Effect Theory during the COVID-19 pandemic and differentiated between dukuhan and housing residents. This research also provides a scientific contribution that adds to the Uses and Gratification Theory that media users actively access various information. The researcher argues that user activity is not enough just to actively access, but needs to be based on critical thinking factors in accessing WhatsApp media. Critical thinking becomes an additional indicator that needs to be tested in the next research. Critical thinking makes people able to pay attention, identify, and evaluate critically to focus attention, select, categorize, and evaluate (Nadeak, Juwita, Sormin, & Naibaho, 2020). The results of this study are also relevant to Rosengrenn's Media Information Exposure Theory that media exposure has indicators of frequency, duration, and attention. Responding to these three indicators, the researcher sees the need for a contribution in the form of an intensity factor in accessing WhatsApp social media. This is corroborated by research by Putri (2019) which states that the intensity of information through social media affects personal factors. That it is necessary to strengthen the intensity factor in information exposure because the intensity of a person in accessing the media has an impact on attitudes and behavior. Also corroborated research by Hafidzi et al (2021) in which the states study concluded that the information that was repeatdly conveyed about Covid-19 ultimately made the public less concerned with Covid. This is evidanced by the emergence of upside-down dact from the news from various mass media.

People's attitudes and behavior are heavily influenced by exposure to social media, especially social media that is often used, namely WhatsApp. This study shows the anxiety attitude of WhatsApp social media users during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study shows that the Anxiety Theory by Greenberger & Padesky was tested in the population of Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents, although there was no difference in anxiety levels between Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents. All residents have indicators of anxiety levels both in terms of physical reactions, thoughts, behavior, and feelings. The research on anxiety levels is



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supported by Azka, Firdaus, and Kurniadewi (2018) and Soliha (2015) which prove that there is an influence of anxiety on the use of social media so that it makes user dependent and addicted to social media.

This study also tested the Theory of Individual Differences by Melvin D. Defleur in accessing WhatsApp social media. The results showed that this theory was tested on the population of Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents because of differences in information exposure that information exposure in housing was higher than in Padukuhan residents.

## CONCLUSION

This study has proven that hypothesis 1 is tested that there is an effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on social media whatsapp on the level of anxiety in the Sorogenen Village community. This means that the higher the level of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media, the higher the anxiety level of Sorogenen Village residents. Hypothesis 2 is tested that there is an effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media on the level of anxiety in residential communities. This shows that the higher the level of exposure to COVID-19 information on WhatsApp social media, the higher the anxiety level of the residents of Mitra Griya Asri Housing. Hypothesis 3 is tested that there is a difference in the effect of exposure to COVID-19 information on the WhatsApp social media of Sorogenen Village residents and Mitra Griya Asri Housing, but there is no difference in the effect of anxiety levels. With the testing of the three hypotheses in this study, it shows that the Uses and Gratification Theory, Information Exposure Theory, Anxiety Theory, and Individual Difference Theory were tested on the population of Sorogenen Village and Mitra Griya Asri Housing residents.

Researchers also contribute that there are additional variables that need to be tested to strengthen the Uses and Gratification Theory on indicators of active audiences, namely critical thinking. Active audiences accessing social media need to be accompanied by a critical way of thinking considering that a lot of information on social media does not necessarily have the truth of information and clear sources (hoax) and is even misleading and makes users' anxiety higher. According to Rosengrenn, Information Exposure Theory has been tested in this study, but the researcher contributes additional indicators in the form of intensity in accessing social media. Further research is needed on critical thinking as an indicator of Uses and Gratification, intensity as an indicator of exposure to social media information, and research to complement other factors that have not been tested in this study, namely other factors that affect the level of public anxiety apart from exposure to social media. WhatsApp, considering that today's society is not only affected by one social media.

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