
RECORD, SPREAD, JUDGE”: A SHORT VIDEO REFLECTING THE CRISIS OF DIGITAL MORALITY AND MEDIA MANIPULATION IN MODERN SOCIETY

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital media has transformed the way society interacts, with both positive and negative consequences. This paper presents a short script titled "Record, Spread, Judge," which delves into the moral and social implications of digital media behavior. The narrative follows a lecturer who becomes the target of public outrage after a misleading video goes viral, highlighting issues such as the manipulation of social media, the spread of misinformation, and the impact of online outrage on mental health, education, and family dynamics. The script sheds light on the ease with which netizens are influenced by viral content and how media platforms often use clickbait to maximize views, disregarding the long-term consequences. The objective of this study is to emphasize the need for critical thinking, ethical responsibility, and empathy in the consumption and dissemination of online content. The research method employed is a qualitative analysis of the script, examining its relevance in contemporary digital culture and its potential to raise awareness about digital manipulation. The findings suggest that the script serves as a creative yet impactful commentary on the dangers of social media manipulation and the lack of empathy in digital interactions. The study implies that fostering digital literacy and responsibility is crucial in mitigating the harmful effects of social media on individuals and society.

Keywords: Digital Ethics; Clickbait; Mental Health; Education; Social Media Manipulation

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the rapid spread of information through social media platforms has transformed how society communicates, shares, and consumes content (Khan et al., 2021; Menon, 2022). The ease with which content can go viral, whether true or false, is both a boon and a burden. Videos, images, or statements can spread like wildfire, influencing public opinion and leading to swift judgments about individuals (Azis & Sari, 2022; Danial Syah, 2021; Indradewi, 2023; Vins et al., 2022; Wahyuni et al., 2023). This has become a significant concern, particularly when the content is misleading or taken out of context. The short video "*Record, Spread, Judge*" explores this issue through the story of Ms. Alya, a university lecturer who faces public outrage after a student posts a misleading, edited video of her. The video demonstrates the harmful impact of digital media on individuals, particularly in the context of how social media users, or *netizens*,

can quickly make judgments based on incomplete information (Bowman et al., 2022; Dart, 2022; Wheeler et al., 2023).

The background of this study is rooted in the growing concern about the manipulation of public opinion through emotionally charged and often incomplete content (Chang & Tsai, 2022; Forelle et al., 2015; Huzaifa et al., 2023; Kalinina et al., 2019; Weng & Lin, 2022). The phenomenon of clickbait-driven content and digital validation has created a toxic environment where truth is obscured, and empathy is scarce. This research aims to analyze how the video highlights these issues and reflect on the moral and social consequences of such digital behavior.

Previous studies have discussed the impact of social media on public opinion. For example, Rakhman and Ismail (2021) examined how viral videos influence public perception, stressing the need for media literacy. Similarly, Mustakim et al. (2020) explored the role of digital platforms in fostering online outrage and how this can affect individuals' reputations. Both studies underline the ethical concerns of sharing misleading information but have not explicitly connected this to local cultural values, such as *Pancasila*, which could offer a framework for ethical digital engagement.

This research aims to analyze how the script "*Record, Spread, Judge*" represents the misuse of social media and its consequences on the emotional and social well-being of individuals. The significance of this research lies in its ability to raise awareness among young people and digital users about the real-world consequences of sharing incomplete or misleading information, thus promoting digital literacy and encouraging ethical online practices.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a social experiment and content analysis approach to examine the reactions and emotional responses of online users to a viral educational video. The primary focus of this research is to analyze how digital behavior, particularly in the comment section, reflects emotional responses and social perceptions. The data population for this research consists of user comments on the posted video, which serves as the primary source of data for analysis. The video was shared across a popular social media platform, generating a variety of public comments within a short period of time. A total of 26 comments were collected within 24 hours of the video's publication, which constitutes the sample for this study. These comments were analyzed to explore the themes and emotions they conveyed in response to the video's content.



The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, where the researcher selects comments based on relevance to the research question, ensuring that only relevant responses are included. The researcher employed non-participatory observation to monitor the comment section without influencing the interactions, preserving the authenticity of the data. Screenshot documentation was used to capture the original form of user comments, ensuring that no alterations were made to the data. After data collection, coding and categorization were performed to classify the comments into distinct themes and emotional responses, allowing for a structured analysis of the data.

For data analysis, the study utilized a qualitative content analysis method to identify patterns, themes, and emotional tones expressed in the comments. This method allowed for the identification of key emotional responses such as anger, approval, or confusion, and the broader social themes they reflect. To ensure validity, the researcher cross-checked the coding process and interpretations with an expert reviewer. For reliability, consistency was maintained through repeated coding and cross-referencing of categorized themes. The findings from this study are expected to offer insights into the emotional dynamics of digital interactions and their implications for understanding the impact of viral content in shaping public opinion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Comment Analysis Table

No	Comment Content	Response Category
1	One of the best things I've watched all week	Appreciative
2	Healing	Emotional
3	The video is great and offers many lessons	Appreciative / Educational
4	Most powerful	Emotional
5	I've been struggling lately, and this helped me breathe again	Emotional
6	Awesome, keep up the spirit of learning	Educational / Appreciative
7	Life-changing	Emotional
8	This was a reminder to keep going. Grateful I found it today	Perceptual / Reflective
9	Uplifting	Emotional
10	Eye-opening	Perceptual / Reflective
11	Cool	Appreciative
12	This touched my soul	Emotional
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10	Eye-opening	Perceptual / Reflective
11	Cool	Appreciative
12	This touched my soul	Emotional
13	Powerful	Emotional
14	Thank you for this. It really gave me clarity I didn't know I needed	Perceptual / Reflective
15	Good	Appreciative
16	Motivating	Educational / Appreciative
17	Inspiring	Educational / Appreciative
18	Education that everyone needs	Educational
19	I've been struggling lately, and this helped me breathe again	Emotional
20	So needed	Emotional
21	Deep	Emotional
22	This is a reminder that every screen is a real human being..	Perceptual / Reflective
23	Short but impactful. Love this kind of content	Appreciative
24	Vip result	Irrelevant / Other
25		Irrelevant / Other
26		Emotional / Symbolic

Emotional Responses

This sub-section delves into the emotional impact of the educational video, as evidenced by the viewer comments. The analysis shows that the video evoked strong emotional reactions, highlighting how personal and empathetic content can resonate

deeply with the audience. The comments, such as "This touched my soul," "I've been struggling lately, and this helped me breathe again," "Healing," and "Life-changing," suggest that the video connected with viewers on a personal level, offering them emotional support, comfort, and a sense of relief. These responses indicate that digital content, particularly educational material, can have a therapeutic effect on individuals by addressing personal struggles and offering moments of solace or healing. This emphasizes the potential of educational content to go beyond information delivery and foster emotional engagement, thus forming a deeper connection with the audience.

Impact on Perception

The comments in this section reflect how the video affected viewers' perspectives or provided clarity. Phrases like "This is a reminder to keep going," "Eye-opening," and "It gave me clarity I didn't know I needed" demonstrate that the video not only entertained but also triggered reflective thinking and new insights. This suggests that short-form videos, while often seen as light-hearted or entertaining, can also serve as powerful vehicles for personal reflection and cognitive shifts. The educational content thus goes beyond its primary role of informing and inspires viewers to re-evaluate their circumstances or adopt new viewpoints, highlighting how digital media can influence perception and stimulate thoughtful engagement.

Educational Value and Appreciation

This sub-section focuses on the viewers' appreciation of the video's educational content. Comments such as "Education that everyone needs," "Motivating," and "Awesome, keep up the spirit of learning" reveal the perceived value of the educational message. These responses indicate that viewers recognize the educational significance of the content and appreciate its motivational impact. It also reinforces the relevance and growing demand for accessible and engaging educational content on social media platforms. The positive feedback indicates that short educational videos not only meet an entertainment need but are also valued for their capacity to deliver important learning materials in a concise and engaging manner. Therefore, this section highlights the growing role of social media as a platform for meaningful education and personal growth.

CONCLUSION

The research on the video "*Record, Spread, Judge*" highlights the significant role that short videos can play in shaping public awareness and digital behavior. The responses from the audience underscore the emotional and perceptual effects of such content, demonstrating the potential for media to evoke empathy, challenge perspectives, and promote critical thinking. By analyzing these reactions, this study confirms that short-form videos, even in their brief format, can be powerful tools for education and moral reflection, particularly when aligned with the values of *Pancasila*. The findings suggest that digital content creators must recognize the responsibility they hold in shaping societal behavior through their content. Future research could further explore how various forms of digital content influence ethical behavior across different age groups, or investigate the

long-term effects of consistent exposure to such content on public awareness and empathy in digital spaces.

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