

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OF THE ANTHEIA PROJECT IN CREATING PUBLIC AWARENESS REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

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ABSTRACT

The waste problem in Indonesia is not only an environmental challenge, but also a major risk to public health and welfare. Every year, Indonesia produces millions of tons of waste from various sectors, such as households, industry, business, and healthcare. If not managed properly, this waste contributes to environmental damage, increased disease risk, and social losses. Strategic environmental communication is essential to raise public awareness, encourage community involvement, and foster responsibility in waste management. This study examines how The Antheia Project, an environmental organization, uses strategic communication to raise public awareness about waste management in Indonesia, with Instagram as its primary platform. Through educational content and calls to action for sustainable practices, The Antheia Project has successfully reached a wide audience. This study employs theories of strategic environmental communication and social media engagement, particularly the impact of Instagram on public discourse. The qualitative case study method involves in-depth interviews, observations, and literature reviews to analyze the organization's communication strategies. The Antheia Project strategy is divided into four stages: assessment, which includes analysis of social issues, relevant topics, platforms, and target audiences; planning, which focuses on creating strategies and content in line with trends and audience preferences; production, which involves creating accurate messages, testing, and delivering content; and action and reflection, which involves implementing online and offline communication activities and conducting regular evaluations through monthly reports. This approach is effective in raising environmental awareness and encouraging community participation in sustainable waste management.

Keywords: *environmental strategic communication, public awareness, social media, instagram*

1. PREFACE

Environmental issues have become a big problem both in Indonesia and throughout the world. Environmental phenomena have also received increasing attention in recent years. Based on the results of the 2022 Environment Performance Index (EPI) report, Indonesia is ranked at the bottom in terms of sustainability and environmental preservation, where Indonesia is in 164th position out of 180 countries in the world (Itan et al., 2023).. One of the environmental problems faced by Indonesia and other countries is the problem of waste, especially inorganic waste which takes a long time to decompose completely. Based on data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in 2022, Indonesia produces 68.7 million tons of waste in one year (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan, 2023).

Various human activities, such as households, businesses, industry and the health sector, often produce large volumes of waste. The ever-increasing amount of waste can cause a buildup of waste, where this waste will end up in final disposal sites (TPA). This condition can shorten the life of the landfill due to the lack of land capacity to accommodate the amount of waste produced (Swarnawati et al., 2023). Waste produced in large quantities can certainly have a serious impact on our environment, such as causing air, water, and soil pollution, as well as disrupting aquatic ecosystems. Plastic waste is not only harmful to the environment, it can also endanger human life

and health. There are still many people who cannot understand or distinguish between safe and dangerous plastic products when used as cutlery (Saila et al., 2024).

Of course, dealing with this environmental problem is not only the responsibility of the Indonesian government, but also the entire Indonesian community. One solution to overcome this phenomenon is to increase public awareness of environmental issues and the dangers of waste, so that people are aware of environmental issues and can play an active role in preserving the environment. A survey has been conducted on the Indonesian people regarding concern for environmental issues. Based on survey data from KedaiKOPI, it shows that many young people still care and have a fairly high level of concern and interest in environmental issues, which is around 77.4% of the millennial generation (Gen Y) and generation Z (Dihni, 2021).

Groups that are concerned about the environment are called Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) as well as new media that continue to emerge as platforms that have the power to tackle this environmental issue. One of many organizations that cares about environmental issues is The Antheia Project. This cause was founded by two friends, namely Samira and Ruhani, with a focus on increasing public awareness of environmental issues. Through their social media accounts, The Antheia Project consistently provides information, invites, education and public awareness creation about the dangers of waste through various activities and contents from social media and offline media.

Success or failure in overcoming environmental issues of course cannot be separated from the environmental communication process. Environmental communication is communication that can be used as an action to prevent and improve environmental issues that are occurring. The presence of social media makes it convenient for people to search for and disseminate information, including providing education regarding environmental issues. According to Kurniawati, the use of effective communication strategies will be in line with the achievement of real environmental conservation, not just mere fantasy (Deswita, 2024).

The Antheia Project utilizes this platform as a communication and environmental education tool that allows them to reach a wider audience in campaigning for actions and disseminating information related to environmental conservation. One social media platform that is currently very popular among the public is Instagram. According to We Are Social (2024), Instagram social media is the second social media with the highest level of users in Indonesia, namely around 85.3% of users. Instagram comes with various features that support its users, such as uploading photos and short videos. The Antheia Project uses Instagram social media as an environmental communication tool in presenting information, spreading environmental action and education to the public.

The Antheia Project Team's Instagram has a total of 3,143 followers and often carries out communication strategy actions by creating informative, educational content, campaigns to educate and expanding reach in public awareness. One example of carried out action by The Antheia Project is the #Say No to Styrofoam campaign. Therefore, the use of social media as a forum for The Antheia Project's communication strategy needs to be analysed precisely, deeply and in detail to find out how the environmental communication strategy used by The Antheia Project increases public awareness. Based on the explanation above, the author is interested in conducting research on "The Antheia Project's Environmental Communication Strategy in Creating Public Awareness Regarding Environmental Issues". This research was conducted to examine and explain the environmental communication strategies implemented by The Antheia

Project Instagram account to create public awareness about environmental issues. In this study, the author uses the theory of environmental communication strategies to analyze the Instagram social media account of The Antheia Project in creating public awareness of environmental issues.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The thesis research applies a qualitative approach as a research approach. A qualitative approach is used to explore and deepen the meaning produced by individuals or groups in a social or humanitarian context (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019). This research uses a case study method which aims to collect data and information by focusing on The Antheia Project, in order to see the environmental communication strategies implemented in increasing public awareness of environmental issues. The subject of the research studied by the author here is The Antheia Project. While the object of research studied by the author is the environmental communication strategy on The Antheia Project's Instagram account.

The main data in this research was collected in several ways. First, observation activities on The Antheia Project's Instagram account by analysing contents consisting of uploads (feeds), videos, stories, and interactions with followers, including the application of captions, number of likes, and comments. Secondly, researchers also conduct in-depth interviews with The Antheia Project team with a total of three core teams. Apart from that, this research uses supporting data, namely a literature review using supporting data originating from credible books, articles, journals and the internet. The data collected will be described and analyzed in a systematic, concise and logical form so that it is easy to understand and interpret the data, using 4 stages, namely, checking data, classification, verification and drawing conclusions. To improve data validity results, researchers use data validity techniques. The researcher used data validity techniques with source and theory triangulation techniques, to complement the researcher's findings from various sources and perspectives.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Antheia Project is a cause or organization that focuses on environmental issues and was founded in 2020 by two friends, namely Ruhani Alisha Nitiyudo and Samira Jha. The Antheia Project is an environmental organization that consistently disseminates information, educates, invites participation, and becomes a discussion platform for the community regarding environmental issues. The Antheia Project's communication activities are centered on two media platforms, namely social media and offline activities. The Antheia Project is active in publishing content on its social media that focuses on environmental information, education about waste processing and action activities. Apart from online activities, The Antheia Project also regularly holds onsite activities, such as seminars at schools or campuses and field actions.

The waste problem in Indonesia is still a big challenge that needs to be faced. This waste problem is largely caused by low public awareness of the importance of protecting the environment. This condition has encouraged the birth of various causes and organizations that focus on environmental issues. One organization that dedicates itself to environmental issues is The Antheia Project, which not only provides information and education, but also becomes a driving force for increasing public awareness and participation in caring for and protecting the environment. The Antheia Project was successfully built based on the motivation of caring for the environment and the desire to protect the environment around it, along with the support of other parties such as family, friends and friends.

“Initially, they wanted to overcome the environmental problems around them, specifically in North Jakarta. They both thought about how to deal with the waste problem in their environment. "The creation of The Antheia Project was also supported and assisted directly by family, friends and friends, Kak Ruhani and Kak Samira, until finally it was able to stand until now from 2020 to 2024" (Head of Public Relations, Azizah, 4 October 2024).

In applying communication strategies, The Antheia Project uses several steps to reach its audience. The activities carried out by The Antheia Project on the use of social media include Instagram, YouTube and TikTok as communication media. On the other hand, apart from utilizing social media, The Antheia Project also carries out direct or offline communication activities in order to increase public awareness, public understanding and as a forum for discussion. The following are several examples of communication strategies implemented by The Antheia Project.

Social media analysis is one of The Antheia Project's strategies, namely by analyzing social media platforms to reach audiences. This is to find out which social media platforms are currently applied, social media trends, understanding of the audience, and most advantageous communication strategies. Through the results of data analysis, The Antheia Project obtained a result that Instagram is the best platform in attracting a wider audience. Besides social media analysis, The Antheia Project often carries out focus group discussions with the internal team to discuss relevant topics, hot issues and new trends that can attract attention and surge public awareness. Then, The Antheia Project also involves external parties in discussion activities.

“We post like stories, which for example are like teasing people. "What if, for example, we make a campaign, we try to ask questions, like stories, like everything about Styrofoam, and then make posts about Styrofoam, so that people become more aware" (Marketing Officer, Jibran Al Dianoli, 04 October 2024).

The Antheia Project's field data collection is also assisted by the research team and education team who are responsible for collecting and analyzing data from the field. This team specifically focuses on collecting data on issues that are currently being discussed, viral trends and urgent problems that need to be addressed immediately. Monthly reports are used to assess the performance of previously published content, whether it has succeeded in attracting the audience's attention or vice versa. Through this analysis, The Antheia Project can identify the types of content that are most popular and that are able to reach a wider audience. This strategy helps the team in compiling contents and approaches that are more effective and in line with the audience's interests.

“After that, there was also field data collection. Usually, the field data is created by the research team, by education and so on. So what do you think right now, for example, it's really urgent that needs to be resolved? So, the last thing is data analysis. So from, if it comes from social media, it's usually like from a monthly report like that. We'll see what content is in demand." (Marketing Officer, Jibran Al Dianoli, 04 October 2024).

Social media is the medium used by The Antheia Project as a means of disseminating information, discussion, ideas and interaction with the audience in order to build closer relationships. The Antheia Project uses social media to share uploads in the form of photos or videos on various social media platforms called @theantheiaproject. The Antheia Project uses platforms such as Instagram, YouTube and TikTok. The Antheia Project started its presence on

social media Instagram in 2020 and has now gathered around 3,143 followers. The Antheia Project also utilizes YouTube social media, although the intensity of its presence is not as big as Instagram. The YouTube video content uploaded by The Antheia project focuses more on videos with a long duration. Apart from that, The Antheia Project is also trying to seek more into TikTok in 2020. Just like YouTube, the TikTok platform is also not the main communication medium due to the lack of a target market compared to Instagram.

The Antheia Project does not only use social media as its communication medium. The Antheia Project actively participates in carrying out field activities in the form of seminars at schools or campuses (Edu Camps), talk shows, workshops, and field activities (beach cleaning). The Antheia Project carries out campus edu with seminars and workshops on campuses such as Bina Nusantara University, Gajah Madah University and Kalimantan Institute of Technology University. In this research, researchers will outline The Antheia Project's environmental communication strategy based on 10 steps which are divided into 4 stages, as proposed by Wahyudin (2017):

Stage 1: Assessment

a. Conduct situation analysis and identify problems

Situation analysis and problem identification are carried out to collect data needed to target audiences and design content that is effective in increasing public understanding, attitudes and awareness. The Antheia Project carries out a process of analyzing and identifying problems in society before carrying out communication activities. This analysis is usually carried out by the research team and education team from The Antheia Project, whose task is to analyze recent issues that need to be addressed immediately. The results of this analysis are then considered by the entire Antheia Project team to determine communication strategies, discussion topics and ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

b. The parties involved in the communication process

Conceptually, the communication process provides an overview of how communication takes place with the actors involved in communication activities (Thadi, 2019). In this case, The Antheia Project team's environmental communication process is carried out synergistically, especially on social media. The research team and PR team collaborate to identify interesting content that can reach the audience more effectively. The Antheia Project also has a creative team consisting of content creators, videographers, video editors, content writers, and persons in charge who are responsible for producing content. This collaboration among the teams ensures that every aspect of communication runs smoothly and consistently.

c. Objective communication to increase knowledge and influence audience action The Antheia

The project implements objective communication by presenting information based on relevant facts, using concepts that are simple and easy for the audience to understand. This is reflected in the content uploaded on social media, which not only conveys information, but also educates the public about various aspects of waste management such as sorting, recycling, and innovations such as eco-enzymes, waste separation and eco-brik. Apart from that, The Antheia Project also carries out field activities, such as seminars, environmentally friendly product labelling, beach cleaning, and turtle release programs.

Stage 2: Planning

- d. Development of communication strategies
Adha and Rozi stated that developing a communication strategy is a step to achieve the goals, policies and programs of a brand or organization (Ahda & Rozi, 2022). Like how The Antheia Project develops environmental communication strategies by implementing four key elements in each uploaded content so that it is effective: repetitive, informative, educational and persuasive. Repetitive, informative and educative content provides an in-depth understanding of environmental issues, while a persuasive approach encourages audiences to participate in changing behavior towards caring for the environment.
- e. Motivate and mobilize the community
In solving environmental problems, not only by presenting information, but a communicator must also be able to provide education, so that the public is aware of environmental issues and actively participates in conveying messages about environmental problems. The Antheia Project applies educational, informative and persuasive content such as innovation content that turns waste into more valuable goods, holding programs on campuses or schools and conducting field activities that actively invite the community to actively participate in doing so.
- f. Choice of communication media
The Antheia Project uses several social media such as TikTok, YouTube and Instagram. The Antheia Project's use of Instagram as a communication medium was the right choice, considering that Instagram is the social media platform with the second largest number of users. Unfortunately, other social media such as TikTok and YouTube have not been utilized optimally by The Antheia Project, even though these platforms also have a large user base and are very popular. Based on data from We Are Social, TikTok social media is the platform with the fourth highest number of users [7].

Stage 3: Production

- g. Delivery of messages to the audience
The Antheia Project delivers messages by determining topics and content that are relevant, accurate, and complete. To ensure this message is appropriate, The Antheia Project pays attention to 3 aspects, namely gender, age and nationality, so that the message conveyed can be well received by audiences of various age and gender groups. Targeting audiences from various age groups is a strategic step, but The Antheia Project needs to prioritize the younger generation as the main focus as the next generation. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, in 2023 there will be 64.16 million young people (Rizaty, 2023). By directing communication towards the younger generation without excluding the older generation, The Antheia Project can effectively increase environmental awareness of environmental issues.
- h. Media production and pretest
According to Kotler P, & Keller, social media is also a type of media production that is designed with various advantages to involve audiences directly or indirectly, so that it can increase public awareness (Ridwan & Sari, 2023). On The Antheia Project's Instagram social media account, media production includes content creation, information, photos, videos and webinars as communication activities to increase public awareness. Before launching existing content and live activities, The Antheia Project will conduct a pretest first. This is done in order to see whether the information or activities submitted and carried out are relevant, accurate and complete.

Stage 4: Action and Reflection

i. Dissemination of information through the media

In the process of disseminating information, The Antheia Project uses two media as communication media, namely social media and offline (direct) media. Communication activities carried out on social media platforms, users can do several things such as uploading content, interacting via messages, commenting on uploads (Fadli & Sazali, 2023). Dissemination of information on The Antheia Project's social media with communication activities such as uploading informative, educative, persuasive content, and interacting with the audience through messages and comments. On offline media, The Antheia Project carries out activities such as conducting seminars to schools or campuses, workshops and field activities.

j. Process of documentation, monitoring and evaluation of communication activities carried out

The Antheia Project's documentation activities are mostly carried out and run well on social media or direct media (field activities). Meanwhile, for monitoring and evaluation activities, for social media, an evaluation will be carried out from the monthly report by looking at content or campaigns that do not reach targets, field activities that do not meet expectations and what actions need to be taken to improve this. This was done by The Antheia Project to find out communication strategies that are considered effective in reaching the audience, and currently viral in society.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of research that has been carried out and analyzed by researchers, the following are the conclusions obtained in answering the problem formulation in this research, namely how the communication strategy implemented by The Antheia Project account is to increase public awareness of environmental issues. The environmental communication strategy that has been carried out by The Antheia Project has implemented an environmental communication strategy with ten steps which are divided into four stages.

The first stage carried out by The Antheia Project is assessment, which involves evaluating societal issues, the topics being addressed, the media, and the target audience. The second stage, planning, focuses on developing a communication strategy by creating and uploading content or activities that align with current trends and the target audience. The third stage, production, involves crafting communication messages that are accurate and relevant to the audience, utilizing various types of content, and conducting pretests to ensure their suitability. The fourth and final stage, action and reflection, includes implementing communication activities on social media and through direct engagement, as well as conducting regular evaluations of each activity in monthly reports.

Based on the explanation above and the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that The Antheia Project has implemented environmental communication strategies smoothly and well as an effort to increase public awareness of environmental issues. However, it is found that other social media such as TikTok and YouTube have not been utilized optimally by The Antheia Project, even though these platforms also have a large user base and are very popular. Based on data from We Are Social, TikTok social media is the platform with the fourth highest number of users.

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