



## Utilizing Social Media to Increase Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness

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### ABSTRACT

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. There have been many case studies about PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). PTSD itself is a mental disorder that appears after a person experiences or witnesses an unpleasant moment. It is stated that PTSD symptoms are shown during the teenage period at around the age of 12-19 years old because, in this current time, adolescents tend to show impulsive or aggressive behavior. The problem lies in the fact that teenagers are not aware of such symptoms as trauma reactions which if left unchecked, will only get worse. We devise a social media platform that can help decrease the burden of teenagers dealing with PTSD symptoms. Adding knowledge and increasing awareness is also our goal in creating the media platform. Recognizing this critical need, we envision a social media platform specifically designed to address the challenges faced by teenagers grappling with PTSD. This platform wouldn't be just another digital landscape; it would be a lighthouse piercing the storm, a safe harbor where understanding and support converge

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## 1. Introduction

In this era, stress and depression are diseases that are often experienced by everyone, whether they are mild stress or severe stress. Since the pandemic happened, it has affected society's functionality. There are lots of aspects that could result in the rise of violence, such as sexual harassment, bullying, domestic violence, and others. People began to show PTSD symptoms as a response to the traumatic experience. In general, this condition can be experienced by anyone without the discrimination of age even in younger years. During the growth period, especially in childhood and the adolescent period, one is most likely to experience some kind of trauma due to the exposure to the stress of growth in their mind (Teicher & Samson, 2016). According to the National Center for Post-Traumatic Disorder in the United States, 7 or 8 out of 100 people experience PTSD at some point in their lives. Women are also more likely to be affected due to their sensitivity to changes.

Levers (2012) states that PTSD is characterized by three sets of symptoms such as re-experiencing, environment avoidance, and hyperarousal. These symptoms cause the patient to feel afraid as well as helpless. Based on the result of Riskesdas 2018, shows that depressive disorders have started to occur in adolescents' age range (15-24 years old), with a prevalence of 6.2%. Yurika Fauizia Wardhani &

Weny Lestari; Center of Health System and Policy Research Development, Surabaya quoted, “Sometimes people who are severely depressed would feel their life isn’t worth living, and research results showed that 50% of crime victims have suicidal thoughts. This indicates that PTSD is indeed a serious problem as the phenomenon is regardless of age. Other than that, several forms of violence, which have been rampant currently, may cast up PTSD cases. Numerous people are still unaware of this topic in detail, resulting in a lack of support and empathy for the one who is experiencing it.

Governments and organizations have stepped in to deal with these problems. For instance, the government is collaborating with Indonesian Psychological Association (HIMPSI) volunteers to run a psychological consultation assistance service intending to deal with mental health problems caused by the pandemic. The service has several treatments, namely public education, psychiatric consultation, and mentoring. Furthermore, there are several social media accounts, one of which on Instagram has an account that discusses PTSD. What has been done previously is good enough. However, in our opinion, it is still not reaching and attracting the attention of teenagers to acknowledge it. On this occasion, we will use visual media and outdoor media such as Out of Home (OOH) to provide information about PTSD, social supports, and interactive content in general aim to provide information that is lighter and easier to understand.

The visual media that we are meticulously crafting distinguishes itself by presenting content that diverges from the conventional narratives surrounding PTSD. While we acknowledge the presence of some overlapping elements, such as motivational words, our commitment to innovation propels us to incorporate diverse and interactive elements, ensuring that our intended audience remains thoroughly engaged and entertained, sidestepping any potential monotony. This strategic approach to visual media dissemination is set to unfold across an array of influential platforms, notably Instagram, Twitter, and Zoom, tapping into the expansive user base, with a special emphasis on teenagers who constitute a significant demographic within these virtual spaces.

Beyond the digital realm, our outreach extends to the establishment of a Group Discussion Forum, providing a dynamic platform where our targets can actively participate and be vulnerable, sharing their personal experiences and engaging in thoughtful discussions aligned with the themes explored in each session. Concurrently, our foray into outdoor media encompasses seminars and booth stands strategically positioned in high-traffic locations, such as bustling malls. The allure of our seminars lies not only in the dissemination of valuable information but also in the inclusion of a compelling incentive – a complimentary consultation with a psychologist or expert, a gesture extended to all seminar attendees.

Simultaneously, our media booth, serving as the epicenter of seminar registrations, assumes an interactive role in amplifying our message. Positioned strategically, this booth becomes a focal point in busy locales, facilitating engagement with our target demographic. An innovative feature at this booth is the provision of a sticky board, serving as a canvas for participants to inscribe their personal stories or messages about PTSD on sticky notes, creating an evolving tapestry of narratives. When this board reaches its capacity, it transforms into a powerful collective message for those who suffer from PTSD, a visually striking display designed to capture the attention of our primary audience, notably teenagers.

In our pursuit of effectiveness, we conducted a comprehensive survey, and the results underscore the positive outcomes of our multifaceted media strategy. One of the testimonials from a member of our target audience who interacted with our content reflects on the impact, stating, "The visually appealing and diverse content not only caught my eye but also educated me about PTSD, a topic I hadn't thought to explore before. As someone who doesn't really dive into Twitter, I found the content accessible, and incorporating a vent session on the platform could further enhance the experience."

## **2. Method**

This research uses more qualitative methods. The procedure entails making observations, participating personally in the research process, conducting interviews, collecting documents, and processing data.

Research subjects were selected using a purposive sampling method, namely subjects selected based on certain criteria, such as Instagram designers and teenagers.

In this research process, also evaluate and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the topics or problems that we will distribute to many people through communication media, as well as assessing the current situation and determining strategies as means to move forward. The strength (S) of our topic is that it can become an awareness for teenagers. It can be a way for teenagers to express their experiences concerning this topic, and make teenagers feel accepted because there is a community that will accept them. Weaknesses (W) that exist regarding our topic are people who do not have or use social media accounts that we use/channel for communication, therefore the content related to this topic will not be known or seen by these people. Besides that, another weakness is that the content we create only covers topics related to PTSD. The existing opportunities (O) in the matter of this topic are the current situation, namely the pandemic. The pandemic has made topics such as PTSD extra highlighted by the public because it is related to mental health awareness as it can increase the public's interest, also there are still not many social media accounts that address this topic. The potential threats (T) lie in the existence of other accounts producing content that is similar to ours yet demonstrating greater creativity and mastery over technological advancements. Lastly, the threats in connection with this topic are the disposition of a lack of sympathy/interest from the audiences toward our account, such as responding, following as well as liking the account and posts that we've uploaded.

We apply the AISAS marketing formula as the material for analysis and reference in our communication planning. There are 5 stages in AISAS itself, which include Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share. The reason we choose this marketing method is because we fancy easy access for the users to search or share information with others. Moreover, our main goal is to increase awareness and deliver knowledge to the public.

- a. **Attention** is the stage where one realizes what PTSD is, and whether they, along with those around them experience it. We will accomplish this by creating and uploading interesting, engaging, captivating, and certainly unusual content for people, especially since the target audience is teenagers so that consumers are interested and pay attention to our content. We create and upload content related to the topic we want to discuss, for example on social media platforms, such as Instagram Ads and Promoted Tweet.
- b. **Interest** is the stage where one becomes interested in the content we have created and would like to learn more about PTSD. We will do content creation through Instagram Feeds and Twitter Posts (Tweet) because we desire to prompt targets aiming for them to acknowledge more about the topic of PTSD.
- c. **Search** is the stage where one is interested or intrigued in our topic, as they eagerly dig up information and ask people around. Here in our content, we come up with information about PTSD through Instagram highlights and Twitter hashtags (#), so that consumers can understand its better. By providing accessible, engaging content, we equip the viewers with the tools to decode the complexities of PTSD. We don't just offer dry facts and statistics; we paint vivid pictures, tell relatable stories, and spark critical conversations. With each scroll, each click, understanding blossoms, replacing confusion with empathy and empowerment.
- d. **Action** is the stage where one begins to feel that they are someone with PTSD, or in which they can be open and brave enough to share their story, or whether to consult with people who intend to recover. We will be applying two media in this stage, which include Out of Home Activation and Forum Discussion. Our OOH Activation is in the frame of the booth and seminar. Furthermore, we will use Zoom meetings as a medium to conduct Forum Discussions.
- e. **Share** is the stage where one follows and likes our content and shares their experiences together with the information about PTSD through Media Stories on Instagram and Retweets on the app X (formerly known as Twitter), hence providing more newcomers who are interested in our content. Each "Share" sends ripples across the vast digital ocean, carrying with it knowledge, empathy, and the promise of hope. Newcomers could be drawn by the beacon of authenticity and find a safe harbor in our community. They discover that it's not just information, but a tapestry of experiences, woven together by threads of vulnerability and strength.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Interviews with 10 Youth Resource Persons regarding Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

1. Does mental health matter?

Undoubtedly, it's significant. Everyone certainly needs good mental health, of course, it must be taken care of because it can affect the way we socialize.

2. What are your views on PTSD?

A mental disorder. It is typically present in those who have had unexpected or frightening experiences.

3. Do you think post-traumatic stress disorder is a big problem?

It is a significant concern for them to deal with anything in their everyday battles.

4. Do you think PTSD can be completely cured?

If you have psychological help, you should be able to do it. But it might take a very long time.

5. Do you suffer from PTSD/have symptoms?

There is trauma, but it heals on its own without help, maybe it's not PTSD, but just a short-term trauma.

6. Do you support this topic being spread to many people?

Strongly agree. Awareness about mental health, especially in Indonesia, is still lacking, so it must be spread more.

7. Do you know someone who has experienced something similar?

Most of my friends are men and they tend to not show emotions or their life problems. It's painful to watch someone go through this, and getting back to where they started is not easy.

8. Do you believe that the Indonesian government is treating PTSD patients appropriately?

It is not optimal enough. From my experience, organizations such as volunteers are better at providing outreach regarding mental health.

9. What things can make you feel better when you are worried/stressed?

It helps my mind to calm down when I spend time with the people I can trust deeply.

10. What can we do to help those who suffer with PTSD?

Welcoming them with empathy, with full attention, where our arms can also embrace them. To just be there for them.

11. What message would you like to convey to PTSD sufferers?

Your life is valuable, your life is loved, and you are not alone. Don't be afraid to speak. Just keep your spirit, you definitely can do it, take it slow, you are great. Slowly, try to face it, so never give up!

### 4. Conclusions

Post-traumatic disorders, inherently resistant to complete cure, demand intensive treatment orchestrated by seasoned experts in the medical field. Despite the inherent limitation in eradicating the audience's traumatic experiences, our aspiration is for the media we create to serve as a medium to catalyze heightened awareness and knowledge surrounding post-traumatic disorders. By imparting valuable insights, we aim to provide utility to individuals grappling with these symptoms. We firmly believe that fostering such understanding will not only be beneficial for those experiencing post-traumatic disorders but also contribute to a much more positive shift in public perception of social media. Each piece we create becomes a torch, illuminating the often-invisible scars of post-traumatic disorders. We also delve into the intricate labyrinth of symptoms, demystifying triggers, flashbacks, and the gnawing emotional dissonance. By equipping individuals grappling with these challenges with valuable insights, we can empower them to navigate the storm within themselves or others.

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