



## CONTENT: JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Journal homepage: <https://cjcs.usu.ac.id>



# Interpersonal Communication Consultation Of Doctors And Patients In The Whatsapp Media (Study At Klinik Mitracheck)

Muammar Rafii<sup>1</sup>, Noviawan Rasyid Ohorella<sup>1</sup>, Aulia Rahma Ritonga<sup>\*2</sup>, Sri Wahyuni<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Gunadarma, Jakarta, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author: [auliarahma@usu.ac.id](mailto:auliarahma@usu.ac.id)

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received: 31 Oktober 2023

Revised: 27 November 2023

Accepted: 27 November 2023

Available online: 28 November 2023

E-ISSN:

P-ISSN:

#### How to cite:

Rafii, Muammar., Ohorella, N.R., Ritonga, A.R. & Wahyuni, Sri. (2023). *Interpersonal Communication Consultation Of Doctors With Patients In The Digital Era Via Whatsapp Media (Qualitative Descriptive Study Klinik Mitracheck)*. *Content: Journal of Communication Studies*.

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to find out how interpersonal communication is carried out in doctor consultations with patients via WhatsApp media. The method used in this research uses qualitative methods. The research results show that in interpersonal communication between doctors and patients via WhatsApp media, health technology is a way to make their work more efficient. Currently the world is experiencing a digital era where all human activities use information technology. Almost all fields use information and communication technology for their respective interests, one of which is the health sector. Currently, interaction between patients and doctors no longer needs to be done directly—for minor illnesses—because of information technology, because the consultation process done quickly. In this research, the author wants to know the effectiveness of using information technology, especially WhatsApp, in the consultation process for minor illnesses between doctors and patients at the Klinik Mitracheck. The author believes this research can determine the effectiveness of interpersonal communication felt by patients and doctors in using WhatsApp as a consultation medium.

**Keyword:** *Interpersonal Communication, General Practitioner, Consultation, Patient, WhatsApp Application.*

### ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana komunikasi interpersonal yang dilakukan dalam konsultasi dokter dengan pasien melalui media *whatsapp*. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pada komunikasi interpersonal dokter dan pasien melalui media *whatsapp*, kesehatan teknologi adalah cara untuk membuat pekerjaan mereka lebih efisien. Saat ini dunia sedang mengalami era digital dimana keseluruhan aktifitas manusia menggunakan teknologi informasi. Hampir seluruh bidang menggunakan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi untuk kepentingannya masing masing salahsatunya adalah bidang Kesehatan. Saat ini interaksi antara pasien dan dokter sudah tidak perlu dilakukan secara langsung—untuk penyakit ringan—karena adanya teknologi informasi. Dalam penelitian ini penulis ingin mengetahui efektifitas dari penggunaan teknologi informasi khususnya *whatsapp* dalam proses konsultasi penyakit ringan antara dokter dengan pasien di klinik MitraCheck. Penulis meyakini dengan adanya penelitian ini dapat mengetahui efektifitas dari komunikasi interpersonal yang dirasakan pasien dan dokter dalam menggunakan *whatsapp* sebagai media berkonsultasi.

**Keyword:** *Komunikasi Interpersonal, Dokter Umum, Konsultasi, Pasien, Aplikasi Whatsapp.*



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<http://doi.org/10.26594/register.v6i1.idarticle>

## 1. Introduction

The digital era is a condition or era where all human activities depend on information and communication technology (Aradya, 2023). In this case, there is no information that can define the digital era

itself because its development is very fast and it just goes according to the demands of the times. However, because the flow is so fast, almost all fields such as research, politics, education, military, and others use information technology for their respective interests. Including for the Health sector. Currently, this situation is carried out in order to provide effectiveness and efficiency in the communication process between doctors and patients. The health sector is using technology as a tool for communication, data archiving, health research, and so on. However, in this research the author will focus on four technological efficiencies for communicating between doctors and patients using digital technology, one of which is the WhatsApp application.

Kathleen S. Verdeber said that interpersonal communication with the help of communication technology media via devices has a very good effect in the health sector (Candrasari, 2019). Health technology itself can be divided into two perspectives. The first perspective is the health professional and the second perspective is the patient. For healthcare professionals technology is a way to make their work more effective. The use of technology in the health sector will make it possible to understand more accurately and in detail about the types of diseases and health-related problems. For patients, technology means efficiency. Efficiency here is defined as the degree to which patients receive information about their health status from both medical/health practitioners and health care facilitation, or the availability of health services provided.

According to Maibach, health communication is the use of communication technology to positively influence individuals, populations and organizations to promote favorable conditions for human and environmental health (Coombs, 2020). Health-related communications between doctors and patients or vice versa consist of health-related messages and communications containing health-related matters. Good communication between doctors and patients as medical/health practitioners can be one of the keys to the success of a doctor or medical/health practitioner in providing medical services. Health communication, which is part of mass communication, is a communication model that can inform the public about health (Rodiah, 2018). Communication is a key factor in building doctor-patient relationships and disseminating information about the health risks of individual and group patients (Saleh, 2019). The application of digitalization of health services has advantages such as orderly queues, easy access to treatment, guaranteed waiting times, affordable costs, and very high quality values (Sari, 2020). Using online registration can increase satisfaction, profits and save waiting time (Sa'idah, 2017). Reducing queues, reducing time, and speeding up the reporting system, as well as providing easy access to the entire community (Jaliyanti, 2018).

In a general context, consultations between doctors and patients are usually carried out face to face, but with technological developments and to ensure clinic efficiency, checkup partners provide services so that doctors and patients can carry out online consultations using the Whatsapp application. However, it cannot be denied that there are obstacles in several symbolic interaction processes between doctors and patients (Wahyu, 2022). Symbolic interaction theory is an approach in sociology that emphasizes the importance of communication, social interaction, and the formation of meaning in society through symbols. Symbolic interactionism focuses on how individuals form meaning through symbols in social interactions. These meanings are created through the language used by individuals both in their interactions with themselves and with others. Society is considered a network of social interactions in which individuals give meaning to their actions and the actions of others using symbols. These symbols are used to name objects and form shared understanding (Suharyanto, et all: .2017).

This shows that when communicating, the communicator must understand who the other person is and what he is like at that time. Apart from that, communicators must be able to speak according to their knowledge, skills and with a good attitude and motivation according to the message to be sent. A person must not just speak so as not to give wrong information to others, especially in terms of communication. (Nurgiwiati, 2017). From the background explanation above, this researcher wants to conduct research with the title: "Interpersonal Communication in Doctor Consultations with Patients in the Digital Era via Whatsapp Media (Qualitative Descriptive Study at Klinik Mitracheck). Based on the background description above, there is a problem formulation in this research is, How is the symbolic interaction between doctors and patients via the Whatsapp

application, and what is the patient's experience after consulting with a doctor at the Klinik Mitracheck via the Whatsapp application?

## **2. Literature Review**

Interpersonal communication has consequences, meaning that every human communication activity has a result. The resulting consequences can be things that are desired or undesired that take different forms. Human interaction cannot be undone. A message sent cannot be undone and nothing can recreate a lost communication opportunity. All messages sent become part of the shared memory of the people involved in interpersonal communication (Thariq, 2017). Imperfect interpersonal communication in symbolic communication is used to convey messages. Sometimes there are differences in interpretation of these symbols between people involved in interpersonal communication. The tendency in interpersonal communication is for visible people to feel that the symbols have the same meaning. This can disrupt communication (Surhayanto, 2017). Communication and health are two words that cannot be separated according to developments in health communication research. The rapid development of information and communication technology, the dynamics of individual and community life, including migration from one region to another, contribute to the development of health communication research. Information is a keyword, because information obtained from the communication process is an individual's capital of choice and decision. Having health information makes it possible to increase individual knowledge and understanding about health (Mulyana, 2018).

Health communication is needed in the health sector because health communication is the key to improving the degree or level of public health. Until now, communication has always developed along with developments in the world of communication technology. Previous communication was carried out in direct consultation with the public and mass media such as audio-radio. WhatsApp has several features including the ability to send messages, group chats, share photos, videos and documents. However, social media users are not using it as a means to increase literacy. Spending time only on WhatsApp as a social media and limited to sending messages, photos or documents does not imply literacy at all. As a result, people tend to be apathetic about the existence of WhatsApp as social media (Sahidillah, 2019).

The most popular application currently is the Whatsapp application, where this application can carry out various communication activities safely, comfortably and easily using just one application, (Untari, 2020) in his article states that Whatsapp is the most popular chat application. At the moment. This application is reportedly used by 1.5 billion users worldwide. In fact, according to the Sensor Tower report, WhatsApp was the most downloaded application on PlayStore and AppStore during 2019. Humans are individuals with good thoughts, bad things to see and feel. In terms of satisfying people's needs, to be social there must be communication or interaction between people. As social humans, humans must be able to fulfill their needs to socialize and communicate with other people in the area. Communication in interaction requires tools, in this case the language elements used. Basically, language is influenced by various components, one of which is place and situation (Abdillah, 2020).

Each patient's characteristics regarding the doctor's communication patterns are explained in more detail in the results and discussion section. Considering that communication patterns between doctors and patients are important in providing health services, and patient characteristics theoretically influence doctors' communication patterns (Habib, 2018). In principle, doctors must treat patients regardless of ethnicity, creed and race, but in practice doctors still look at attitudes (Keshet, 2017). New media or new media is a new communication tool that utilizes internet technology. New media can be accessed in 2 directions, as long as the owner of the new media account and the audience can interact directly on the platform. New media provides a platform for accessing various kinds of knowledge, general information, and can create discussion space for the public; can be accessed anywhere and anytime. models of new media or new media mean YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, Snapchat, etc. (Riyanto, 2022).

### 3. Methods

The object of this research aims to determine the extent of interpersonal communication through the use of social media between doctors and patients. The approach to this research is a qualitative approach using qualitative methods, researchers will be able to determine how to search, collect, process and analyze the results of the information that has been obtained. Detailed and detailed information from sources can be the key to research (Candrasari, 2019). The reason for choosing the Mitra Check clinic is because this clinic has a tagline “upaya untuk memberikan pelayanan penunjang yang cepat”. This clinic prioritizes fast health services, so it prioritizes optimal service via the online media WhatsApp. Research subjects are three informants who will provide various information needed during the research process. In this research subject, telemedicine is a medical service using visual, telecommunication and audio which can be described as using the WhatsApp application which can connect health service facilities even geographically. To make it easier for patients to consult a doctor (Asriati, 2021).

### 4. Result and Discussion

#### WhatsApp Media as a Diffusion of Innovation in Klinik Mitracheck

The diffusion of innovation theory is a theory that discusses how new ideas and technologies spread in a culture. The diffusion of innovation theory become the medium that can be a space that quickly provides various information to patients, such as health service information, as well as schedules of doctor's practice activities. Besides that between *Whatsapp*, klinik mitracheck, and patient comes a combination which are combined on an "*information space*" platform. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary the word diffusion means the spread or seepage of something in the form of culture, technology or ideas from one party to another, while innovation means the introduction or introduction of new things, namely renewal. Is WhatsApp media a new media in the world of medicine?

*"No, because from the beginning WhatsApp has been used in the medical world to communicate between doctors, both within the hospital and outside the hospital." (Interview results from 1<sup>st</sup> informant). "The positive thing is that patients are more informative and the negative thing is that patients think that just a consultation is enough, but it must be seen directly and acted upon directly."*

From the explanation given by the main informant, it was concluded that WhatsApp media is well known and has even been used by doctors to communicate with patients since the emergence of WhatsApp media. In the diffusion of innovation, are there positive and negative things about communicating via WhatsApp? From the explanation given by the main informant, it was concluded that there were positive and negative things when a patient consulted via WhatsApp. Responding to new media innovations, how effective does one patient think it is when consulting a doctor via the WhatsApp media application?

*"I think it's quite effective, because it really helps if I'm busy and can't go to the hospital that day." (Interview results from 2<sup>nd</sup> informant Mitracheck Clinic patient). "During face-to-face consultations it is more significant when examined, if via WhatsApp media you only get a doctor's prescription without further examination."*

From the explanation given by supporting informants, it was concluded that with the existence of new media, namely the diffusion of innovation, it was quite effective in consulting with doctors via the WhatsApp media application. Are there any differences experienced in face-to-face consultation services and consultation services via WhatsApp media? This is made clear in the interview: From the explanation given by supporting informants, it was concluded that there were slight differences experienced during consultations via Whatsapp media, the difference was that when examined face-to-face the consultation was more significant, whereas through Whatsapp media they only received a prescription for medication without further examination. Of the several applications that have been used for consultations, which application is the most helpful? From the

explanation given by supporting informants, it was concluded that the WhatsApp application makes it very easy to consult a doctor.

### **Symbolic interaction of patients with doctors at Klinik Mitracheck**

Symbolic interaction theory is a new theory that emerged after the Theory of Action which was pioneered by Max Weber. Symbolic interaction theory has been put forward by some sociologists in opposition to the radical behavioral theory pioneered by Watson. Sociologists were John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley, George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer. In depth, this theory was advanced by George Herbert Mead. Mead, born in Massachusetts, USA, February 27, 1863. Interaction is a social relationship between individuals in such a way that the individuals concerned influence each other.

*"For the communication process between patients and doctors, patients are usually more explicit in asking questions, and patients also feel more private. Give directions via Whatsapp then follow up face to face. Doctors usually use words that calm patients so they don't feel excessive panic."*

From the explanation given by the 3<sup>rd</sup> informant, it was concluded that in the interpersonal communication process online or in WhatsApp media, patients have the opportunity to ask questions in detail and patients will also feel more private in their complaints. With the interaction dimension, how does the doctor explain to the patient that there is a disease diagnosed by the patient via WhatsApp media? From the explanation given by the main informant, it was concluded that how to explain to patients when they have a disease by giving directions first, then following up face to face. The efforts made in communicating when a patient was diagnosed and felt afraid was to calm him down first and provide motivation to be enthusiastic about the patient's recovery.

*"There are no procedures, just send a message directly to the doctor. I quite often use Whatsapp media for consultations."*

From the explanation given by supporting informants, it was concluded that when you want to consult a doctor via Whatsapp, you should not use procedures that make it difficult for the patient. Was one of the patients at Klinik Mitracheck at the first time they consulted via WhatsApp? From the explanation given by supporting informants, it was concluded that the patient often used the WhatsApp application to consult with a doctor, which could make things easier for the patient himself.

Based on the findings of researchers in the field conducted through interviews, good and communicative interpersonal communication between doctors and patients will have a positive impact on patient recovery and the occurrence of The smoothness of patient examinations is coupled with the diffusion of innovation where an activity can be carried out in communicating through a social system that includes technology to make it easier for patients to consult with doctors. The basic thinking or basic assumption of symbolic interaction theory is that the interaction that occurs between different thoughts and meanings is a characteristic of society. In interaction, each person and society is a subject and cannot be separated from one another, influencing and deciding each other, and this can be interpreted as saying that doctors and patients need each other. The characteristics of symbolic interactionism are characterized by the existence of relationships between individuals in society through communication and this communication uses the symbols it creates. In symbolic interactionism, it is defined as body movements because body movements can be seen, such as sounds or voices, body movements or gestures and bodily manifestations, all of which contain meaning.

### **5. Conclusion**

Based on research results on interpersonal communication between doctors and patients via WhatsApp media, health technology is a way to make their work more efficient. The use of technology in healthcare enables a more accurate and detailed understanding of diseases and health-related problems. Technology means efficiency for patients. Effectiveness here is defined as the extent to which patients receive information about their health status, both from doctors and medical assistants, as well as through the availability of health services provided. In this post-modern era,

technology in its various forms has encompassed itself in all areas of life, including health technology. Technology must support the creation of quality public health, health technology has developed rapidly. The WhatsApp application on Google Play supports patients and doctors to communicate their health status and the follow-up care they need. However, without this application, patients and doctors must be able to communicate via existing social media such as WhatsApp.

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