

Health Information-Seeking Behavior on the Internet Among Housewives in Balam Merah Village

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ABSTRACT

The search for information related to health has recently become important for life. Information is developing very rapidly so that it is necessary to select the right information according to needs to avoid hoax information. The type of research used is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and literature study. This study uses the theory of information seeking behavior developed by Wilson. This study uses several informants who have the following categories; actively use the internet, have children, and search for health-related information. The results of this study indicate that the search for information begins with the need for information so that they can search for information, to reach the stage of using information, housewives seek information from various sources to determine the validity of an information. There are obstacles faced by housewives in the process of searching for information, including not knowing the official website for health information and using up internet quota, thus increasing expenses. So in the process of searching for information, the housewives of Balam Merah Village already have the ability to select information.

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INTRODUCTION

Information seeking is an activity that a person can undertake to solve a problem and make decisions in their life. The development of the times has led to information seeking becoming broader and more accessible. The more information a person needs, the more actively users engage in information seeking activities. According to Wilson (2000), information seeking behavior is a behavioral effort to obtain information by seekers interacting with all types of information systems. Every information seeker recognizes the need for information to fulfill their daily activities. Information plays an important role in human life. With information, people can solve problems often encountered while performing their roles. However, everyone has different information needs. The higher a person's level of need, the more actively users engage in information seeking. Information seeking can be defined as a person's activity to solve and make decisions. This activity is carried out when a person feels that the information they possess is insufficient for their needs. Along with the development of science, information seeking is not only related to work or research but also covers a broader scope, such as daily life.

Social media has rapidly developed and is utilized by housewives to connect with the "outside world." Housewives, who are supposed to work at home managing daily household life, also use existing social media to communicate and obtain information (Harahap & Adeni, 2020). By utilizing smartphones as a tool to fulfill

information needs, health-related information seeking is more easily obtained through the internet. On the other hand, the negative impacts of health information seeking on the internet by housewives include: increased anxiety, the spread of misinformation, and the potential for making wrong health-related decisions. Information is developing very rapidly, so it is necessary to select appropriate information when using the internet because any criminal act can occur, and internet users must be able to filter information wisely to avoid hoax information. The need to avoid hoax information. This is in line with Wisesa's (2021) opinion that the public or internet users must be wiser. The research was conducted to determine the health information seeking behavior on the internet among housewives in Balam Merah Village. The research subjects were housewives because housewives play an important role in serving their family's health, especially children, within a family.

Fulfilling health-related information needs is very important in supporting daily life. Indonesia is a country whose health level is not yet good (Rizkiyah & Mayangsari, 2020). Therefore, health is something that needs attention, so a housewife must be more enthusiastic about her family's health. Enthusiasm for health can be achieved by accessing information through a smartphone connected to the internet. Thus, all kinds of diseases, symptoms, and ways of handling them can be accessed directly and easily. This is what prompted the researcher to further investigate the information seeking behavior of housewives in Balam Merah Village with the title "Health Information Seeking Behavior on the Internet Among Housewives in Balam Merah Village." The secondary data in this study consisted of mothers who actively use the internet to seek health information, obtained through interviews and surveys. The type of research used in this study is a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. According to Sugiyono (2018), Qualitative research methods are often called naturalistic research methods because the research is conducted in natural conditions. This research was conducted to naturally identify the health information-seeking behavior on the internet among housewives in Balam Merah Village. The qualitative approach is a series of studies that obtain descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior. After the data is collected, the next stage, namely data analysis, can be carried out (Rukajat, 2018). Researchers use a descriptive qualitative approach to clearly and thoroughly describe the health information-seeking behavior on the internet among housewives in Balam Merah Village.

METHOD

Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, and literature studies. Observation is the systematic observation and recording of the phenomena being studied. This method is carried out by direct observation at the location by systematically recording the observed phenomena (Afrizal, 2015). So, the observation carried out by the researcher was direct observation at the research location regarding the health information-seeking behavior on the internet among housewives in Balam Merah Village.

According to Sugiyono (2018), an interview is a process where two people meet with the aim of obtaining data and information through a question and answer process. An interview is a data collection process for a research study. Researchers conduct direct or face-to-face interviews with respondents and ask oral questions to get answers related to the problem to be studied, with the aim of obtaining as much data as possible. Interviews are conducted with informants designated by the researcher and considered to fit the research category. One of the categories is that the informant is a housewife. Then, informants are grouped again into housewives who actively use the internet, housewives who search for health-related information on the internet, and housewives who already have children. Interviews are conducted by asking several questions to informants. Interviews are conducted in a structured manner where the researcher uses a pre-prepared question guide to gather data. In the research, informants have given a statement of willingness and readiness to be interviewed.

Sugiyono (2018) states that documents are records of past events. These documents can be in the form of writings, pictures, or monumental works such as diaries, life histories, stories, biographies, regulations, and policies. In this research, the researcher focuses on literature studies by utilizing references to add information to this research. The data analysis process is carried out by reducing the data obtained through observation, interviews, and literature studies. Data analysis according to Sugiyono (2018) is a part of the research process by interpreting the data obtained from the field. These data are re-examined by separating the data into 2, namely data considered important and data considered unimportant or merely additional so that the resulting data is clearer. The organized data then undergoes a reduction process. This data reduction process is one type of data processing carried out in the research process. In the reduction process, the researcher creates patterns and categorizes the collected data. Data considered irrelevant are not used by the researcher, and relevant data are then verified. The data that have gone through the reduction process are then presented using a narrative text format into a report in the research data. Health information seeking behavior on the internet among housewives in Balam Merah Village.

RESULTS

1. Information Behavior

As stated by Ms. R, an informant, "Regarding health information, there was a time when I was scrolling through social media, and health information appeared. But at that time, I didn't specifically need it, so I just skipped it." A similar sentiment was expressed by Ms. A, an informant, as follows: "There was a time when I was opening Google and searching, and health information appeared through an advertisement." Thus, it can be seen that if information is found unintentionally, there is no follow-up regarding that information.

2. Information Seeking Behavior

Ms. K, an informant, stated that "health information, usually when I have a toothache, I look for the most effective solution on the internet." In addition, Ms. H, an informant, also stated that "health information needs are very important to me. If I or my family get sick, I usually quickly search the internet for information about the disease, how to handle it, and its causes. So, information can be easily fulfilled directly." From the results of the explanation, informants show that information that receives follow-up is information needed by someone.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted by the researcher, it can be concluded that housewives in Balam Merah Village have utilized the internet to search for information. The information search conducted by housewives is influenced by their needs, thus requiring them to seek information. Housewives in Balam Merah Village seek information to fulfill their information needs in the health sector because health is currently considered important to them. The information search conducted by housewives has reached the stage of information use. The obstacles experienced by housewives include a lack of searching for information through other media, so they are only focused on one medium. In fact, every piece of information certainly has differences due to the many references that appear. Therefore, efforts are needed to seek information through various information media so that the obstacle of a lack of references can be overcome.

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