

to stunting also demonstrate that digital communication can broaden reach and boost awareness. However, its success depends largely on message clarity, interactivity, and effective audience targeting (P. Hall et al., 2018; Herawati et al., 2025; Khatimah & Laksmi, 2019).

To analyze this issue more thoroughly, this article utilizes Stuart Hall's theory of representation alongside Ostergaard's 3A model of campaign effects (S. Hall, 1997; Tomaselli, 2016; Venus, 2004). Hall's approach is valuable because it considers communication as a process of meaning-making through language, symbols, and visuals, rather than a simple transfer of information (S. Hall, 1997; Tomaselli, 2016). In the case of Instagram, this means that elements such as captions, colours, illustrations, photographs, and layout all play a role in shaping and sharing the message about stunting prevention. Ostergaard's 3A model indicates that social campaigns influence audiences gradually through three interconnected stages: awareness, attitude, and action (Venus, 2004). This model is particularly relevant for digital health initiatives, where the goal is not just to inform but to guide audiences from recognition to concern and, ultimately, to preventive behaviour (Sholikin et al., 2026). Recent research on social media

campaigns supports this integrated approach, highlighting the importance of engagement, message framing, and behaviour-focused design for campaign success (Record et al., 2023).

Although prior research has explored media framing, public communication, and government campaigns in health contexts, few studies have specifically analyzed how a provincial government agency strategically uses Instagram to address a long-term policy issue like stunting prevention (Khatimah & Laksmi, 2019). Most existing research focuses on media coverage, pandemic communication, or general campaign strategies, rather than on how visual representations influence campaign outcomes within policy-driven digital health initiatives (Balogun et al., 2023; Berg et al., 2021; Lu & Cindy Ngai, 2024).

This study fills that gap by analyzing how BKKBN West Java showcases stunting prevention on Instagram, how this content aims to enhance awareness, attitudes, and actions, and what institutional constraints limit the campaign's impact (Sholikin et al., 2025). Consequently, the article highlights that effective digital policy communication relies not only on the presence on social media but also on

coherent meaning-making, audience engagement, and persuasive pathways from visibility to action.

Method

This study used a qualitative case study approach within a constructivist-interpretivist framework to explore how the West Java office of the National Population and Family Planning Board communicated about stunting prevention on its official Instagram account, @bkkbnjawabarat. Conducted from June to October 2023 in West Java, the research included preliminary observation, fieldwork, data analysis, and interpretation. A case study was selected to gain a detailed understanding of a specific institutional communication practice, especially how a public health campaign was created, shared, and understood in a digital setting.

The study focused on the stunting prevention campaign conducted by BKKBN West Java, as reflected in the visual content shared on Instagram. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with purposively selected informants with direct knowledge of the campaign. The main institutional informants included four BKKBN West Java staff members directly involved in the campaign: the Head of Advocacy, Information, Education, and Public

Relations; two expert staff members in the same division responsible for campaign content; and the former division head who initiated the organization's social media efforts. Supporting informants were two women followers of the @bkkbnjawabarat account, living in West Java, and fitting the campaign's target audience of women with maternal experience or pregnancy-related concerns.

The interview guide was designed around the core analytical aspects of the study: representation, awareness, attitude, action, media choice, and campaign obstacles. These interview insights were supplemented with documentation of Instagram posts, captions, visual materials, relevant literature, and institutional records. The data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which consists of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Sholikin, 2019). To enhance the credibility of the results, source triangulation was employed by comparing interview findings, observations of Instagram content, and perspectives from public followers. Participation was voluntary for all interviewees, and their identities are

anonymized in this report using participant codes.

Because the primary analytical focus of this article is institutional communication practice, the audience-side dimension was explored through two follower informants rather than a broader reception sample. For that reason, the findings on audience attitude and action should be interpreted as indicative of how selected users understood the campaign, rather than as a comprehensive account of how the wider public in West Java interpreted or acted on the messages.

Results and Discussion

Results

This section outlines the empirical findings derived from two sources: primary data collected through in-depth interviews and secondary data from documentation of Instagram content published on the official @bkkbnjawabarat account. The findings are structured around three main themes. The first theme addresses how stunting prevention is represented through the account's visual and textual elements. The second explores the campaign's intended effects on awareness, attitudes, and actions. The third discusses Instagram as a communication platform and highlights

practical constraints observed during implementation (Sholikin, 2025). Consistent with qualitative reporting principles, the findings are presented descriptively, with more in-depth conceptual analysis reserved for the Discussion section.

Representation of Stunting Prevention in Instagram Content

The findings reveal that BKKBN West Java mainly used Instagram for preventive communication. Interview data indicate that the campaign was not aimed at children currently experiencing stunting but focused on preventing new cases by engaging families and future parents early on. One key informant clearly stated this approach:

"In our stunting campaign, we focus on prevention so that children do not become stunted, not on handling children who are already affected. That is why our messages and materials are also centered on prevention. (Interview with KI-1, September 2024).

This statement indicates that the campaign focused on early preventive measures instead of curative messages. The same emphasis on prevention was reflected in how the institution described the content of its Instagram posts.

“The materials we share in our social media campaign begin from the earliest stages, namely prospective brides and grooms, pregnant women, and toddlers. They cover how to maintain healthy food intake, avoid unhealthy foods, reduce risk factors such as smoking by mothers and fathers, and even include content that provides recipes for children’s complementary feeding.. (Interview with KI-1, September 2024).

This preventive approach was also evident in the documented Instagram posts. Several posts conveyed practical messages about household nutrition, maternal health, and child feeding. Some shared recipes for complementary feeding, while others pointed out foods to avoid for children. Additionally, some posts stressed healthy habits for pregnant women.



Figure 1. Instagram post of @bkkbnjawabarat

Figure 1 illustrates that the account included educational content that simplified and made household guidance on preventing stunting practical. Thus, Instagram served both as a platform for institutional visibility and as a tool for public health education.

Simultaneously, the findings indicate that communication about stunting was not always the account's primary focus. A supporting informant who followed the account confirmed that some posts were helpful, but she also noted that posts documenting activities occurred more often.

I have seen several posts from @bkkbnjawabarat about what pregnant women should avoid, and

However, these posts were relatively infrequent, suggesting that while practical calls to action existed, they were not consistently emphasized throughout the campaign.

Instagram as a Communication Medium and the Constraints Visible in Practice

The final set of findings pertains to Instagram as a communication tool. Interview data indicate that BKKBN West Java viewed Instagram as appropriate because of its visual features and extensive reach. The organization also aimed to establish a consistent identity by using blue as its primary color. One key informant highlighted that blue serves as a distinctive visual identifier for BKKBN:

Visually, one element is very characteristic of BKKBN: the color blue. Blue is BKKBN's brand identity. (Interview with KI-1, Sept 2024)

This is evident in the documentation, which shows that many campaign visuals feature blue as a main design element.



Figure 6. Blue as the dominant visual identity in BKKBN West Java's Instagram content

Figure 6 illustrates that blue was consistently present across multiple posts, serving as a clear marker of institutional identity. This visual consistency indicates that branding was intentionally integrated into the account's communication approach.

Simultaneously, the documentation shows inconsistency in the visual identity, with some posts suddenly shifting to red-dominated designs. A former institutional actor clarified that this change was not solely due to local communication preferences.

This is a dilemma because it was an instruction from the central office and has political dimensions. It was not only Instagram content; even some offline BKKBN activities also used a red color scheme. (Interview with KI-4, Oct 2024)

This suggests that certain elements of the campaign's visual design were influenced by directives outside the

provincial team's communication strategy.



Figure 7. Red-dominated visual content indicates an inconsistency in the campaign identity

Figure 7 illustrates a noticeable departure from the blue-centric visual identity commonly seen in other posts. Empirical evidence indicates that the campaign did not maintain a consistent visual language throughout the account.

Finally, the documentation includes evidence of audience interaction. The comment section screenshots reveal that many posts received a noticeable number of likes, but comments were limited and two-way conversations were not prominently evident.



Figure 8. Comment-section screenshots showing audience interaction patterns

Figure 8 indicates that the account achieved notable audience exposure primarily through likes, while showing less visible engagement in comments. This suggests that Instagram served more as a dissemination platform rather than a space for ongoing dialogue.

The interview and Instagram data collectively reveal that @bkkbnjawabarat was actively used to promote stunting prevention. However, its implementation showed inconsistencies. Clear preventive messages, family-focused visuals, and action-driven content were evident, but these coexisted with substantial institutional documentation, inconsistent visual cues, and limited engagement. These observations serve as an empirical foundation for the following section, which explores their wider implications concerning representation and the campaign's impact.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the main challenge was not Instagram itself as a platform but how BKKBN West Java implemented it for stunting communication. The account showed features typical of public health campaigns, such as preventive messages,

recurring visuals, and links to wider stunting prevention programs. However, applying Hall's concept of representation and the 3A campaign-effects framework reveals a clearer pattern: the campaign's underperformance wasn't due to a lack of content, but because the meaning of stunting prevention wasn't consistently conveyed in culturally meaningful, visually coherent, and behaviorally instructive ways (Weeks et al., 2022). According to Hall, meaning is not just transmitted but created through signs, language, and images. Although the account repeatedly framed stunting as a family issue, this message was often diluted by institutional documentation styles, inconsistent branding, and poor audience segmentation. Consequently, the campaign gained visibility but lacked clear, persuasive, and actionable guidance (Williams et al., 2025).

From a representational perspective, a key insight is the family-centred visual framing of father, mother, and child. This is a notable advantage because it broadens the understanding of stunting from solely a child-health issue to a shared household and intergenerational concern. Moreover, the finding concurs with research indicating that stunting prevention is more successful when communication is

integrated into broader household and community routines, rather than limited to a technical nutrition message. Nonetheless, the main problem with the representation is that the account did not sustain a single dominant prevention narrative sufficient to establish the campaign as a clear anti-stunting initiative. As the findings reveal, content about stunting was mixed with various ceremonial and activity documentation, weakening the thematic focus and reducing the message's effectiveness. This is important because health communication campaigns rely not only on the presence of messages but also on their emphasis, repetition, and clarity of purpose (P. Hall et al., 2018; Williams et al., 2025).

A key issue is cultural relevance. The campaign did not strongly connect to West Java's local culture, missing references to local foods, familiar fish, and everyday examples that could make the nutrition messages more relatable. This is more than a minor design flaw; it affects how relevant the message feels. Culturally tailored communication typically enhances understanding, trust, and emotional impact, as people respond better to messages that use familiar social and cultural cues. Research on stunting prevention in Indonesia also

indicates that local context and community-focused framing are crucial for messages to be truly internalized (Chapman et al., 2024; Meiyenti et al., 2025). The problem with the BKKBN campaign was not a lack of educational effort but its overly generic approach, which failed to resonate locally.

The analysis enhances understanding of the awareness dimension. The campaign aimed to raise awareness by highlighting the first 1,000 days of life, a strategic move that connected stunting prevention to a clear preventive timeline. Nonetheless, social media awareness isn't achieved just by posting relevant content occasionally. It requires intensity, repetition, and visibility within the feed environment (Kite et al., 2023; Tunkl et al., 2023). The issue was not the lack of awareness messages but their insufficient prominence. This reflects a broader challenge in social media campaigns: many organizations produce informational content that is effective in isolation but less impactful cumulatively due to fragmented exposure and poor strategic engagement. The BKKBN case thus refines Ostergaard's first step, demonstrating that digital awareness campaigns rely not only on information but also on a consistent communicative

structure of the platform (Kite et al., 2023; Venus, 2018).

The attitude aspect offers even deeper insights. It's not just that the campaign aimed to influence motivation; the main issue is its insufficient use of content types that typically shift audiences from awareness to emotional engagement. It lacked testimonial stories, real-life family accounts, and trusted public figures or influencers who could have made the prevention messages more relatable, credible, and emotionally impactful. This omission is important because attitudes are rarely changed by information alone; they are influenced by identification, trust, and emotional connection. Here, the key point isn't that every government campaign must involve influencers, but that attitude change requires more than just presenting static information. The BKKBN campaign was mostly educational and thus only partly effective (Kite et al., 2023).

The weaker aspect becomes more apparent in the action phase. While the campaign included practical initiatives like counselling, mentoring, and the Elsimil app, its visual content often failed to clearly guide audiences with simple, repeatable steps for what to do next. The account lacked explicit calls to action and

practical visual cues, such as checklists, step-by-step prevention prompts, or repeated instructions, to convert policy messages into daily behaviours. Essentially, the platform showcased the program but did not consistently offer actionable steps for users to follow daily. This is significant because health communication campaigns are most successful when their message design provides clear behavioural cues, rather than assuming that awareness automatically leads to action (Kite et al., 2023; Venus, 2018).

From a practical standpoint, BKKBN's call to action should be repackaged into clearer, more behavior-oriented Instagram formats. Instead of stopping at general promotion of programs such as Elsimil, the account could use carousel posts or reels that present daily or weekly preventive checklists, such as antenatal visit reminders, iron tablet routines, household nutrition steps, or partner support actions. These posts should be accompanied by direct links in the bio, QR codes, WhatsApp contact pathways, or story highlights that connect users immediately to counseling, screening, or field services. Public health social media frameworks emphasize that campaigns are more effective when messages are

tailored to specific audiences, designed with user needs in mind, and linked to real-world outcomes rather than online visibility alone. In this sense, a stronger Instagram call to action would not merely tell audiences that prevention matters but would guide them through what to do next, where to go, and how to access support in actionable terms.

The analysis of managing Instagram adds depth to the discussion. Although the platform's interactive features could have enabled two-way communication, visible interactions remained somewhat limited. While likes were often high, comments were generally less meaningful, and the account did not consistently respond. This is significant because social media engagement involves more than just popularity; it also influences how public institutions promote responsiveness, trust, and participation. In this light, the BKKBN account appears to be in a transitional phase: it has some institutional visibility but has not fully adopted dialogic public communication. This gap indicates that the campaign was active online but lacked depth of communication (Kite et al., 2023).

Low comment volume should not be read simply as evidence of weak audience interest. This study did not

directly measure digital literacy among pregnant women or prospective couples in West Java, yet the broader Indonesian digital context suggests a more complex explanation. Official national mapping of digital capability shows that digital readiness has improved overall but remains uneven across regions and dimensions, especially in terms of empowerment and practical digital use. In parallel, recent reviews of maternal and child digital health interventions in low- and middle-income countries indicate that uptake and interaction are often shaped by unequal digital literacy, technological limitations, and cultural barriers. In practical terms, this means that members of the target audience may still consume, save, or privately share health content without publicly engaging via Instagram comments. The relatively low level of two-way interaction on @bkkbnjawabarat should therefore be understood not only as a matter of campaign design, but also as a possible reflection of uneven digital and health literacy, privacy sensitivity, and platform habits among the intended audience.

Viewing the constraints section as a governance challenge enhances its impact more than considering it merely a design issue. Research shows that government social media guidelines,

often perceived as bureaucratic standards, encouraged detailed documentation for reform, accountability, and reporting. This shifts the emphasis from superficial content critique to the fundamental principles of public sector communication management. The core issue wasn't just a lack of creativity but a structural tension between accountability-focused posts and campaign-driven persuasion. In the case of BKKBN, compliance-focused communication limited the flexibility needed for culturally relevant, behaviour-oriented campaigns. This insight highlights how bureaucratic communication principles can unintentionally hinder campaign success, even when an institution actively engages online.

A related governance concern involves third-party vendors. The issue isn't just about technical outsourcing but also the disconnect between aesthetic appeal and meaningful health communication. When vendors prioritize visual appeal and follower growth, they may create an active-looking account that lacks a strong communicative logic. This is particularly problematic in public health, where content, accuracy, audience engagement, and actionable messages are as important as visual

design. Outsourcing without proper knowledge transfer and oversight can reduce policy communication to mere display management. Therefore, the vendor issue should be seen not just as a procurement matter but as a governance challenge related to message stewardship.

Overall, these findings enhance the article's distinctiveness. Although previous research on stunting communication in Indonesia highlighted the roles of social media, community health messaging, and audience targeting, this study offers a deeper understanding of why a government Instagram campaign can still underperform despite selecting the appropriate platform and having a visible institutional presence. Its contribution is in showing that problems in digital government communication stem from the interaction of representation, campaign effectiveness, and public management. The main issue is not just the message content but also its visibility, cultural relevance, prompt clarity, and the ways in which organizational routines shape what is posted. This insight is relevant beyond West Java, as many public institutions now rely on social media for preventive health messages. The BKKBN example

illustrates that success depends on integrating cultural adaptation, trusted messengers, consistent visual identity, and management systems that prevent campaign strategies from being overshadowed by bureaucratic routines.

Finally, this study's limitations should be recognized. It is based on a single provincial institutional account and a small group of interviewees, so it cannot represent all of Indonesia's government stunting campaigns. The analysis focuses on visible communication patterns on Instagram and does not include long-term audience behavior or comparisons with platforms like TikTok, YouTube, or X. Despite these constraints, the findings are still valuable, emphasizing the importance of future research: comparative studies across different provinces and platforms, mixed-methods evaluations of campaign effectiveness, and in-depth investigation of how culturally adapted digital messages influence maternal and child health practices.

Conclusion

This study shows that Instagram has strategic potential for government health communication. Its effectiveness mainly hinges on how campaigns craft meaning, relevance, and calls to action, rather than on the platform itself. For

instance, the BKKBN West Java anti-stunting campaign successfully presented stunting as a family-centered issue and shared preventive information about nutrition, maternal health, and early childhood care. However, it did not fully reach its communicative potential; messages about the problem were often overshadowed by ceremonial institutional content, cultural references to West Java were underused, emotional engagement was limited, and calls to action lacked practicality and audience focus. The study highlights that digital government communication should be evaluated not only by online visibility or visuals but also by its ability to foster clear public understanding, sustain relevance to the issue at hand, and inspire action. Its primary contribution is to demonstrate that the success of digital health campaigns depends on the interaction among representation, campaign impact, and public management. Practically, this implies that government agencies should develop culturally relevant content, leverage trusted messengers more effectively, provide clearer behavioral guidance, and align communication objectives with social media strategies.

An important lesson for other government institutions concerns the use of third-party vendors to manage health

communication. This study suggests that outsourcing social media management can weaken public health messaging when vendors prioritize visual appeal and follower-growth metrics over educational clarity, behavioral guidance, and contextual relevance. In preventive health campaigns, aesthetic quality matters, but it cannot substitute for substantive message stewardship. For that reason, institutions that rely on vendors should establish stronger editorial oversight, clearer public health communication standards, and closer collaboration between communication designers and health program officers, so that digital visibility does not come at the expense of educational meaning.

This study is also limited by the relatively small audience-side sample. While the institutional dimension of the campaign was examined in depth through BKKBN actors, the interpretation of audience attitudes and actions was explored only through two follower informants. Future research should therefore include a wider range of audience voices, especially pregnant women, prospective couples, and village-level beneficiaries, so that the social reception of the campaign can be assessed more fully beyond the institutional perspective. Although the research

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