



Original Article

Analysis of the use of the hashtag #JulidFiiSabilillah on Instagram in the psychological role of the attack on Palestine by Israel

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Abstract:

This study analyzes the use of the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah on Instagram as a tool in the psychological warfare that occurred during the Israeli attack on Palestine. This research aims to find out how the hashtag affects public perceptions and emotions. Using a qualitative method with a case study approach, this study analyzed the top 30 contents that used the hashtag. The results showed that the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah was used in various themes such as solidarity, activism, emotional, attack, and information. Content with attack and information themes is more dominant and gets high interaction, indicating that this hashtag is effective in shaping public opinion and influencing people's emotions. Content with emotional themes also shows a significant influence in generating empathy for Palestine. This research shows that social media, particularly through the use of hashtags, can play an important role in psychological warfare by changing people's perceptions and emotions.

Keywords: Social Media, Psychology war, Julid Fi Sabilillah.

Introduction

Technological progress today is unavoidable. Humans are forced to adapt to existing advances. Including the development of communication and information technology. Currently, communication and information technology has become a primary need for society. Life in an era of disruption that glorifies technology has penetrated every level of society. New media or new media is a term that describes the presence of a new era in communication or interaction, computers, information and communication networks (Rozi, 2023). According to Mondry in (Feroza & Misnawati, 2020) New media is online media that is technology-based, flexible and interactive, which uses the internet to operate both publicly and privately. Social media is a form



<https://jurnal.usk.ac.id/riwayat>

of new media. Social media is online media, which allows everyone to interact, share and form social networks (Mulyono, 2021). The use of social media in Indonesia is experiencing rapid development. Quoted from We Are Social, more than 50% of the Indonesian population uses social media. There are 167 million active social media users out of a total population of 276.4 million people. With an average usage time of 3 hours, 18 minutes (DIGITAL 2023 Global Overview Report, 2023). Not only that, 78.5% of internet users are estimated to use at least 1 social media account. The development of new media has brought many changes to society, especially in society's attitudes and thought patterns. Based on the theory of technological determination here shows that communication technology has a central role in society. (Stai et al., 2021). So it can be said that social media as part of the development of communication technology can also have an influence on changes in public opinion. Currently, social media as part of new media is widely used in the economic, educational, health, political and even war sectors.

Israel's brutal attack on Palestine is in the world spotlight today. This started on October 7 2023, Hamas as one of the Palestinian militant groups led a massive invasion and attack against Israel from Gaza, breaking through the Gaza-Israel dividing wall and forcing their way through the Gaza border crossing to nearby settlements and Israeli military installations. This incident is one of the most complex and protracted events in the world, involving various political, religious and humanitarian dimensions. Even before the events of October 7 2023. The events that occurred between Palestine and Israel not only resulted in physical attacks from the two countries concerned, but also created digital attacks. World netizens participated in this attack by using their social media.

The large number of narratives and propaganda sent from each party circulating on social media emphasizes that social media as a new medium is used in cases of war. This is called psychological war. Psychological warfare in a conflict often aims to influence public perceptions and emotions, which then creates support or opposition for the parties involved. Psychological warfare can involve various tactics such as psychological operations, mental influence, and manipulation of human minds (Stevens, 2016). One form of psychological warfare is the emergence of the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah on various social media, including Instagram. In the context of social media, hashtags function as a powerful tool in organizing content and making it easier for users to find and participate in discussions about certain issues. Julid Fi Sabilillah is a play on the word Jihad Fi Sabilillah which means fighting in the way of Allah (Amalia, 2023). Julid Fi Sabilillah is a movement by an association of Indonesian Netizens to convey criticism of Israel's actions towards Palestine. This movement does not only include harsh criticism from Indonesian netizens. However, the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah on Instagram also contains a strong warning and various kinds of up-to-date information regarding conditions occurring in Palestine. As well as uploads that add insight into Palestine.

The focus of this research is to find out how the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah influences public perceptions and emotions regarding the events currently occurring between Israel and Palestine. Considering the importance of social media in shaping public opinion, this research becomes relevant in exploring the role of hashtags as a tool in this psychological warfare through an in-depth analysis of the top 30 contents in the period 19 May 2024 to 25 May 2024 in hashtags. This research uses qualitative research. Sugiono (in, Nursapiah, 2020) said that qualitative research is research used to examine the

conditions of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, motivation, impact of using the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah on the perceptions, opinions and emotions of the Instagram user public.

The research process began by identifying and collecting posts through searches on Instagram using the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah. The posts selected are content that has the highest level of interaction, such as the number of likes, comments and shares. After the data was collected, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis to identify the main themes that emerged from the content. Thematic analysis allows researchers to group data into meaningful categories and explore relationships between themes. Using case studies will allow researchers to carry out in-depth analysis. Case study is a research method used to understand a particular case in depth and intensively (Fiantika et al., 2022). This case study will focus on the top uploads in this hashtag in the period 19 May 2024 to 25 May 2024. Data collection used in this research used observation and documentation.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative research type. Sugiono (in, Nursapiah, 2020) said that qualitative research is research used to research natural object conditions, where researchers are key instruments. This approach allows researchers to explore the meaning, motivation, impact of using the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah on the perceptions, opinions, and emotions of the public of Instagram users. The research process begins by identifying and collecting posts through searches on Instagram using the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah. The posts selected are content that has the highest level of interaction, such as the number of likes, comments, and shares. After the data was collected, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis to identify the main themes that emerged from the content. Thematic analysis allows researchers to group data into meaningful categories and explore relationships between themes. Using a case study will allow researchers to conduct an in-depth analysis. Case studies are a research method used to understand a particular case in depth and intensively (Fiantika et al., 2022). This case study will focus on the top posts in the hashtag between May 19, 2024 and May 25, 2024. Data collection used in this study uses observation and documentation.

Results

Themes and Patterns of Using the Hashtag #JulidFiiSabilillah

The top 30 uploads in the hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah can be categorized based on the type of content theme uploaded. In this research, it is classified into five categories, namely, solidarity, activism, emotional, attack, information, and content that has no correlation with hashtags.

1. Solidarity

In the top 30 posts there were only a few posts showing solidarity or providing encouraging support for Palestinian independence. Palestine. As in the following upload example:

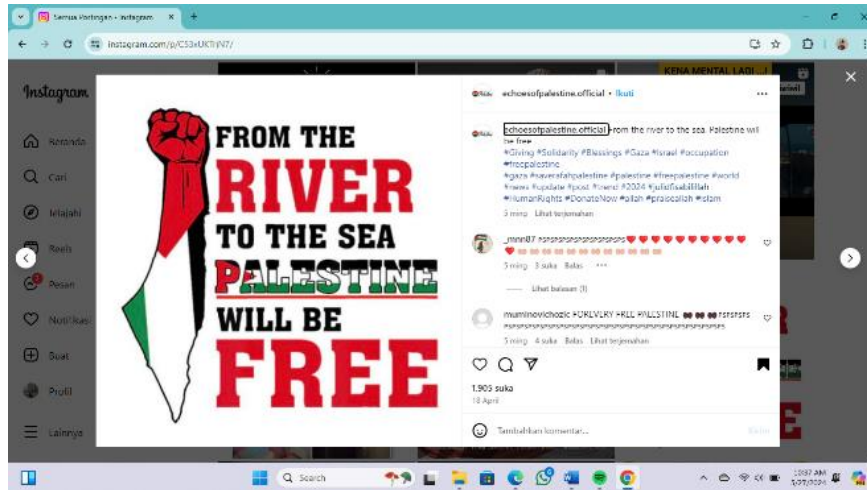


Figure 1. Palestina Support Instagram

The upload is an illustration with the jargon of the spirit of liberation of the entire Palestinian territory. With the caption "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" accompanied by several related hashtags, including #Giving #Solidarity #Gaza #freepalestine #palestine. The number of likes on this upload is 1,905, and there are 36 positive comments in response to this upload. Give each other encouragement, and show emotional support from users without harsh words that bring each other down. Judging from other posts, with this solidarity theme, not a single negative response can be seen.

2. Activism

One of the digital activism activities in posts on this hashtag is calling for a boycott of products affiliated with supporting Israel's brutal attacks on Palestine. Apart from products, influencers who support or promote affiliated products are also impacted by this boycott activism movement. As in the following upload

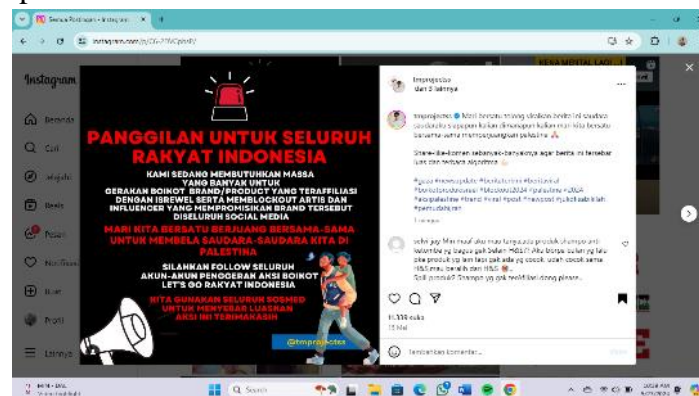


Figure 2. Screenshoot Like and Comments Aktivism about Palestina

This upload received 11,339 likes, with 581 comments, and comments on this upload often contain support for resistance and calls for action. This post also tends to motivate people to continue supporting full Palestinian independence through struggles that can be carried out such as boycotts. This can be seen from the caption written by the account owner @tmprojectss "Let's unite, please spread this news, my brothers, whoever you are, wherever you are, let's unite together to

fight for Palestine."

3. Emotional

Many uploads show the emotional feelings of users. Moreover, seeing the heinous acts committed by Israel certainly makes the public even more emotional. As in the following upload

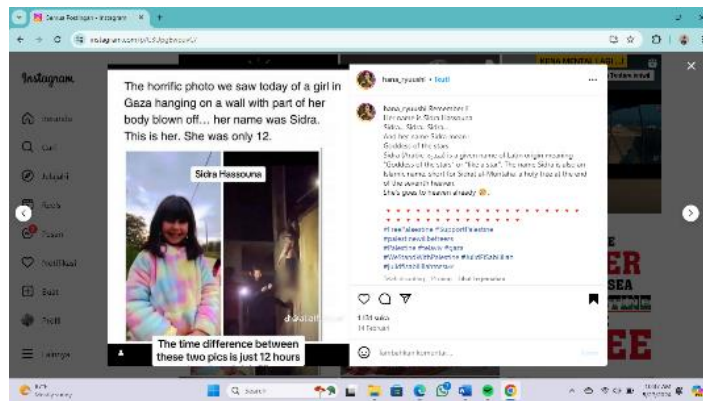


Figure 3. Moment Child Palestina Emotional Humans of israel's brutal

This content contains screenshots uploaded from other social media showing one of the child victims of Israel's brutal attacks on Palestine who were tragically killed. With 1,131 likes and 16 comments. Judging by the public's response in the comments, they felt sad and sad to see the condition this little girl was experiencing. However, there was one interesting comment, namely a comment that corrected the information shared by the account owner. In fact, the little child who was the victim of Israel's atrocities was not 12 years old, but 6 years old. The account owner actually responded negatively to this comment. However, this upload became the top upload on the hashtag #JulidFisabilillah.

4. Attack

The hashtag JulidFisabilillah, which has one of its aims to carry out attacks on the Israeli occupiers in Palestine via social media, of course in this hashtag there must be forms of attack. One of them is in this upload

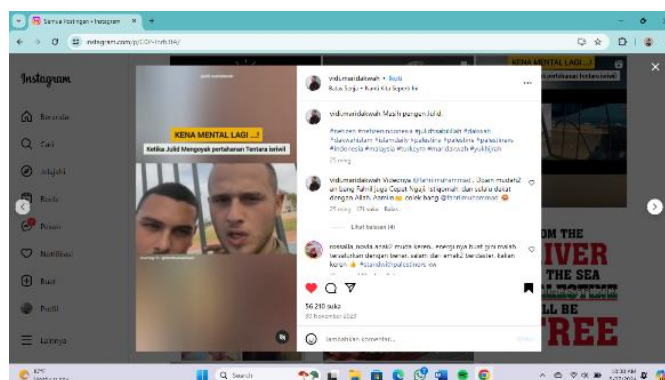


Figure 4. Screenshoot Video IDF with Hastag #Julidfiisabilillah

This upload is in the form of a video of the attack via OmeTv social media which was uploaded to Instagram reels using the hashtag #julidfisabilillah. This reel contains netizens showing videos of Hamas attacks on the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). This

ignites the emotions of the opponent. Apart from that, he also showed a video of an IDF member dancing to TikTok in a gentle and graceful style. This made his fellow IDF colleagues laugh at his colleague's actions. With a total of 56,200 likes and 1,170 comments. Many positive responses support this uploaded content.

5. Information

There are several uploads on this hashtag which contain information about Palestine, or about the Julid Fisabilillah movement carried out by Indonesian netizens, so that netizens are given the nickname Hassan Bin Tsabit's brigade or troops, as in the upload below.

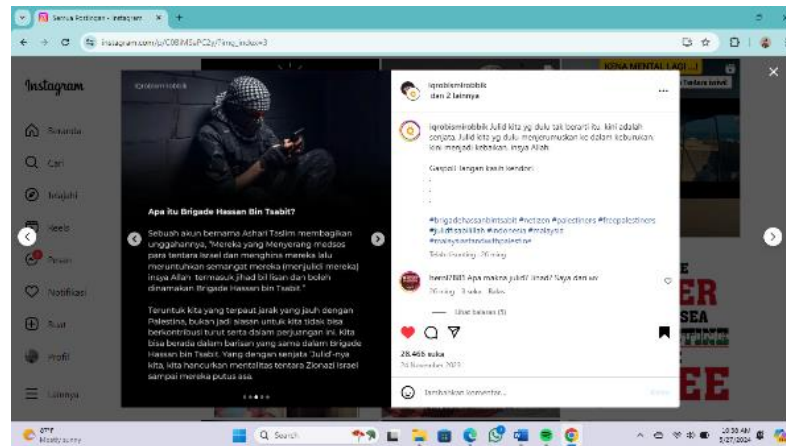


Figure 5. Screenshoot Hastag #julidfiisabilillah with respons positive

The information conveyed via a microblog consisting of several images in one upload has a total of 28,466 likes and 591 comments. The response to this upload is positive, and supports this movement, while advising not to use harsh words in carrying out mission.

6. Irrelevant content

Not only uploads related to Julid Fisabilillah or the struggle to support Palestinian independence. However, there are also irrelevant uploads, such as this upload.



Figure 6. Screenshoot Political Post with Palestina on this hashtag #julidfiisabilillah

There are quite a lot of political posts that have nothing to do with Palestine, or other posts on this hashtag. Moreover, those who upload this irrelevant content are blue tick accounts with followers reaching tens of thousands. So, it's not surprising that this

irrelevant upload is included in the top 30 uploads on the hashtag. From the classification of content theme categories in this hashtag, those that get the most responses or interactions are those that have interesting content and those that have informative content. Like the attack video content that was distributed via Instagram reels using hashtags, it had tens of thousands of likes. Or on microblog content that explains the Julid Fisabilillah movement. Apart from that, interesting content also creates a lot of responses from the public.

Meanwhile, content that is simply created only has little interaction. However, the content remains top content. Because one of the things that influences content to become the top content in a hashtag is its suitability for the hashtag. Apart from the suitability of the content with the hashtag, the account that uploads the content also influences the interactions that occur in the content. For example, content that is not relevant to the hashtag, but the content is uploaded by a verified account and an influencer Ustadz. So that this content can be included in the top 30 contents. In this hashtag, the pattern of use of content with emotional and solidarity themes is less than content with themes of information, activism or attacks. This is because the Julid Fisabilillah movement itself is an attack movement via social media carried out by netizens against Israel as a form of resistance to attacks carried out by Israel on Palestine.

The role of the hashtag #julidfisabilillah in changing perceptions and emotions

The process of forming perceptions according to (Walgito, 2010), starting from an object that causes stimulation to the sense organs or receptors. Then the stimulation received by the sensory organs is transmitted by the sensory nerves to the brain, and a process occurs that makes the individual aware of what he sees, what he hears, or what he touches. What is within the individual, the individual's thoughts, feelings, experiences will actively influence the perception process (Siska Siregar et al., 2023). Generally, users who are exposed to informative content tend to have a better understanding of events occurring in Palestine due to Israeli attacks. Apart from that, netizens who are exposed to informative content also have a change in perception that their spicy Julids or typing can be rewarded if used for the Julid Fisabilillah action.

This can be seen in one of the comments on the microblog content which contains information about what the Hassan Bin Thabit brigade and the Julid Fisabilillah movement are. Where the Hassan bin Thabit brigade is a group of netizens who carried out attacks via social media. The name Hassan bin Thabit is taken from the name of a friend of the Prophet Muhammad who was known to weaken the spirits of enemies through his poetry. Several comments from several accounts, including a comment from @defikayaskurun "Oh Allah... This is the first time I really intend to Julid on social media", or a comment from @mj_mutiara "Finally Julid is useful". Content that contains themes of activism and attacks involves netizens taking immediate action or taking action. Whether it's a Julid, boycott, donation, or participating in a campaign. Moreover, content with this theme is very dominant in the hashtag #julidfisabilillah, and gets quite high interaction. Content with the theme of attacks, especially if the content is uploaded in the form of video reels, gets quite a lot of attention from netizens, and full response and support for attacks via social media.

As has happened in several posts inviting netizens to boycott products affiliated with Israel, causing affiliated products to suffer major losses. This is proven by data

reported by CNBC Indonesia, Starbucks shares fell to US\$91.4 per share on October 12 2023, which is the lowest price since the boycott began ([Puspadini, 2023](#)). Participation in the campaign to block out artists and influencers who promote brands or products affiliated with supporting Israeli atrocities is also increasingly widespread, and is fully supported by netizens. This is proven by the response to content containing calls for a boycott and blackout by the @tmprojectss account on this hashtag. In the comments uploaded by the account @asritriyana17 it said "Done blocking sis!! Come on, bro, post a list of artists and celebrities who don't really speak out about Palestine!! Cheer up Sis. A spirit that still has a heart that still speaks out about our brothers in Palestine." Or on the @marycrackers account which says "Waiting for the list to block out".

Meanwhile, content containing emotional themes is not as dominant as content with themes of activism or attacks on this hashtag. So content with an emotional theme in this hashtag does not have a significant influence on changing public perceptions or emotions. However, the public still empathizes with what has happened to Palestine. This can be seen from the comments on this emotional-themed upload, these comments were uploaded by the account @ventivor3 "This makes me sick. "Rest in peace sweet girl," he wrote in English. Social influence plays a very important role in changing perceptions and emotions. Social Influence Theory was originally formulated by Herbert Kelman (1953) in the early 1950s as a framework that explains the conditions in which social influence causes changes in attitudes or behavior. Kelman (1974) defines social influence as changes in behavior in the social environment caused by one person or a group of people ([Davlembayeva & Papagiannidis, 2024](#)).

The Role of the Hashtag #julidfiisabilillah in Shaping Public Opinion

Mass communication according to Elvinaro Ardianto ([Bachtiar et al., 2023](#)) is defined as a message conveyed through mass media to the general public. From this it can be understood that mass communication must utilize mass media, even though the message is aimed at the masses. If you don't use mass media, then it doesn't fall into the category of mass communication. Social media as part of mass communication is a form of new media. Social media is part of the development of information and communication technology that people use to connect with each other. Mulawarman ([in, Shofiyah, 2020](#)) also said social media is a communication platform used by users for social interaction. Social media has become a new space for forming public opinion ([Muttaqin & Sriyono, 2021](#)). Public opinion is basically the opinion of the average individual in society as a result of the discussions mentioned above, to solve a problem, especially those circulating in the mass media. ([Yusuf, 2024](#)).

The hashtag #julidfiisabilillah influences public opinion by focusing its attention on resistance to the genocide committed by Israel against Palestine. With so much content focusing on activism and attacks, netizens tend to become more active in taking action to defend Palestinian independence.

This action was carried out massively by netizens, as can be seen from the many comments in the form of harsh criticism from netizens on IDF accounts or influencers who support Israel. In mass psychology, changes in individual human behavior are caused by the effects of mass situations ([Bachtiar et al., 2023](#)). Individuals who feel uncomfortable with inconsistencies between their opinions and the majority opinions they see on social media may change their attitudes, from initially believing their personal opinion to ultimately following public opinion.

Implications of the hashtag #julidfiisabilillah in psychological warfare

The use of the term war in terms of psychological warfare shows that there is a very close connection between psychological warfare and military warfare. This means that these techniques and tactics were always used in conjunction with armed warfare. Historical facts show that psychological warfare techniques have long been used side by side and in parallel with military warfare. Az Zagul (2005) in (Bandono & Kustantono, 2020) defines psychological warfare as "The art of using mass communication by one party to influence the morale of another party." In psychological warfare, there is often a fight not only between candidates or troops, but also involving supporters who are present directly in the debate arena or battlefield. (BASYARI & HARBOWO, 2024). The use of the hashtag #julidfiisabilillah on social media, especially Instagram, can play an important role in psychological warfare in this incident. This hashtag is used to spread emotional narratives that can arouse anger, sympathy and solidarity towards the Palestinian people.

Apart from that, from the start this hashtag was created with the aim of bringing down the mentality of members of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), or people involved in supporting actions carried out by Israel. This hashtag is one of the commands for netizens to carry out their July actions. This is proven by the large number of Israeli soldiers who have locked the comments column, blocked and deleted their social media accounts due to being mentally bullied by Indonesian netizens. (Ibrahim, 2023). The use of this hashtag also has the potential to have a long-term influence on public perceptions, emotions and opinion regarding support for Palestinian independence from Israeli attacks.

Conclusion

The hashtag #JulidFiSabilillah on Instagram serves as an effective tool in psychological warfare, influencing public perceptions and emotions towards Israel's attacks on Palestine. Analysis of the top 30 content shows that attack and information-themed content is the most dominant and receives the most interaction, indicating the effectiveness of hashtags in shaping public opinion. Content with emotional themes, although less dominant, is also able to arouse public empathy. The use of this hashtag shows that social media has great potential in shaping public perception and is an important tool in psychological warfare. This research emphasizes the importance of understanding the role of social media in modern conflict and how its use can influence the dynamics of psychological warfare. The use of popular hashtags such as #JulidFiSabilillah needs to be optimized to mobilize support and disseminate accurate information. The public must also increase their digital literacy so they can verify information and understand the context of the conflict, so they are not easily trapped in propaganda and fake news.

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