

## Interpersonal and Digital Communication in Supporting Midwifery Education for the Community in Percut Sei Tuan Deli Serdang Village

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of interpersonal and digital communication in supporting midwifery education for the community in Percut Sei Tuan Village, Deli Serdang. The research method used was qualitative descriptive with in-depth interview techniques with midwives, midwifery students, and marginalized communities. The results of the study show that interpersonal communication between midwives and the community plays an important role in building trust and understanding about maternal and child health. Meanwhile, the use of digital media such as WhatsApp and social media is able to expand the reach of midwifery education, although it still faces obstacles to access to technology. The conclusion of this study confirms that the integration of interpersonal and digital communication can increase the effectiveness of midwifery education in marginalized communities.

**Keywords:** Interpersonal Communication, Digital Communication, Midwifery Education, Society

### INTRODUCTION

Midwifery education has a crucial role in improving maternal and child health, especially in marginalized communities who often face limited access to health services (Qashlim et al., 2021). Effective communication strategies, both interpersonal and digital, are an important bridge to convey accurate and relevant health information to this group of people (Sayekti et al., 2020; Vidayanti et al., 2022). Percut Sei Tuan Village, located in Deli Serdang, North Sumatra, is one of the areas that has the characteristics of marginalized communities, where the level of education and access to health information still needs to be improved. In villages with challenging geographical conditions and low levels of education, health education and community service programs are very important to improve health status (Sentana, 2018). Interpersonal communication, which involves direct interaction between midwives and the community, allows for the delivery of information that is personalized and responsive to individual needs. However, the range of interpersonal communication is often limited by geographical factors and human resources. Therefore, integration with digital communication is a promising solution to expand access to midwifery education for marginalized communities.

The use of digital technology, such as social media, health apps, and other online platforms, can reach a wider audience and provide easily accessible health information anytime and anywhere. The digital divide in Indonesia remains a pressing issue, hindering the full realization of the potential benefits of technology in education, especially for rural communities and underprivileged communities that often lack the necessary infrastructure and resources. Previous research has shown that effective interpersonal communication can increase public trust and participation in health programs (Fitriani et al., 2019). On the other hand, the use of digital media such as instant messaging applications and social media has

begun to be adopted to support health education, although digital literacy challenges and limited internet access are still obstacles (Pratiwi, 2022). The scientific novelty of this study lies in the integration of interpersonal and digital communication in the context of midwifery education in marginalized communities, which has not been studied specifically in the Deli Serdang area. The purpose of this study is to analyze how interpersonal and digital communication can complement each other in supporting midwifery education for the community in Percut Sei Tuan Village, as well as identify the challenges and opportunities faced in its implementation

## **METHOD**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The research subjects included independent practice midwives, midwifery students, and representatives of marginalized communities in Percut Sei Tuan Village, Deli Serdang. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The sampling technique was carried out purposively, with the criteria of participants who were active in midwifery education activities. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis methods to identify interpersonal and digital communication patterns that occurred in the midwifery education process.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Based on the results of the interviews, it was found that interpersonal communication between midwives and the community is still the main method in delivering midwifery education. Face-to-face interactions, group discussions, and direct consultations are considered effective in building public trust and understanding. However, limited time and the number of health workers are obstacles in reaching the entire community.

Meanwhile, the use of digital media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube has begun to be adopted by midwives and midwifery students to disseminate health information. Digital media makes it easier to access information for people who have devices and internet connections. However, there are still groups of people who have not been able to access digital technology optimally due to economic limitations and digital literacy.

The integration of interpersonal and digital communication provides an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of midwifery education. Interpersonal communication remains important in building emotional relationships and trust, while digital media can expand the reach of education and provide faster and flexible access to information (Rahmawati et al., 2021; Pratiwi, 2022). The results of this study are in line with the findings of Fitriani et al. (2019) who stated that a combination of communication methods can increase public understanding and participation in health programs.

However, the main challenge faced is the gap in access to technology and digital literacy among marginalized communities. Therefore, efforts are needed to increase the capacity of digital literacy and provide supporting facilities so that the use of digital communication can be more evenly utilized.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research shows that interpersonal and digital communication complement each other in supporting midwifery education for the community in Percut Sei Tuan Village, Deli Serdang. Interpersonal communication is effective in building trust, while digital communication expands the reach of education. The integration of these two methods can increase the effectiveness of midwifery education, but it needs to be balanced with increasing

digital literacy and technology access in marginalized communities. Further research is expected to develop a communication integration model that is more adaptive to local needs.

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