Digital communication strategy of Instagram @chinese_server in deconstructing anti-Chinese sentiment

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Abstract

To date, negative sentiments toward the Chinese ethnic group in Indonesia still exist. Using a content analysis research design, this study attempts to analyze the effective communication strategies of the Instagram account @chinese_server in rectifying various negative sentiments toward the Chinese ethnic group. The results show that the account effectively deconstructs negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnicity, including pro-PRC, exclusivity, non-nationalism, and atheism, through historical and social narratives packaged in short videos. The account can reach cross-ethnic audiences, encourage multicultural understanding, and facilitate a shift in attitude from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. However, resistance is still evident in the form of negative comments. This study is expected to contribute to the discourse on the role of social media in shaping public perception and multicultural education.

Introduction

Indonesia is a multi-ethnic country with over 1,340 ethnic groups (Na'im et al., 2010). Differences in collective identity influenced by ideology often trigger multicultural problems, including negative sentiments and prejudice (Smooha, 2022). Political actors often reinforce these sentiments for personal gain (Juma & Simiyu, 2019; Mworia & Ndiku, 2012) and by the media, which shapes public perception. Negative sentiments are defined as social beliefs that judge a group negatively, which then leads to discrimination, conflict, and xenophobia (Adejumo-Ayibiowu, 2023; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Peguero, 2009; Voci, 2024; Way et al., 2008). This condition reflects a lack of intercultural sensitivity, which is important for social cohesion (Hammer et al., 2003).

Ethnic Chinese have often been the target of negative sentiment since the Dutch colonial era, when they were viewed as non-natives whose political loyalty was questionable despite their dominant economic role (Aditjondro GJ, 1998; Chen, 2022; Tan & Dahana, 1997; Zhou, 2019). Discrimination peaked during the May 1998 riots, which involved looting, arson, and sexual violence (Coppel, 2003; Heryanto, 2000; Purdey, 2006; Tan, 2008). This

was inseparable from the influence of the New Order regime and media, which portrayed the Chinese as a privileged group in the economic sphere, thereby inciting hatred (Hoon, 2011) and reinforcing negative stereotypes (Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020).

In the reform era, democratization and pluralism reduced the intensity of discrimination, although negative sentiments remained more subtle in public and digital spaces. The involvement of ethnic Chinese in politics and economics, including cooperation with Indonesian and Chinese bureaucrats, also changed the dynamics (Herlijanto, 2016). However, the persistence of these sentiments shows that Indonesian society still faces challenges of intercultural sensitivity, the lack of which can trigger prejudice, miscommunication, and hinder social cohesion (Hammer et al., 2003).

Amidst developments in communication technology, social media plays an important role as a space for interaction between cultures. Instagram is one such social media platform that can be used. Social media can eliminate stereotypes and racism in the media, thereby promoting better inter-ethnic relations (Schemer, 2014; Wilder, 2020; Mastro, 2023). Conversely, harmful content posted on social media about ethnic groups can trigger hostility between groups, especially in a homogeneous environment (Conzo et al., 2021). In addition, social media algorithms often prioritize sensational content over factual information, thereby accelerating the spread of disinformation and exacerbating social polarization (Husandani et al., 2025). The Instagram account *@chinese_server* is one example of the use of social media in cultural education and clarification of negative sentiments towards ethnic groups. Through short video content (*reels)*, this account presents narratives of Chinese history and culture in the Indonesian context, aimed at the general public.

This study uses two main theoretical frameworks to analyze the content of videos posted by the Instagram account *@chinese_server* and how users respond to these posts. The first theory used is the *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)* developed by Milton Bennet. This theory explains the stages of a person's response to cultural differences, ranging from rejection to integration (Hammer et al., 2003). The second theory used is Harold Lasswell's communication model, which emphasizes the communication process: *who says what in which channel to whom with what effect (Lasswell, 1936).* Through a combination of the two, researchers can see how cultural messages packaged in video/reel posts are conveyed and how users interpret them in intercultural interaction.

Previous research has examined the role of the media in reducing negative sentiments towards ethnic Chinese, namely through the #StopAsianHate movement on social media, which has been proven to raise public awareness and reduce negative sentiments towards ethnic Chinese (W. Zhang, 2022). In addition, (Azaria, 2022) emphasizes the role of Indonesian Chinese parents in building national and ethnic identity in children, while (Averina, 2024) highlights the stereotype that "Chinese people own shops," which persists despite beginning to diminish in society.

Unlike these studies, this study focuses more on Instagram to overcome multicultural issues related to negative sentiments towards the Chinese community. The urgency of this study lies in its contribution to enriching the academic discourse on the role of social media in shaping public perceptions of ethnicity and multicultural education. Amidst rampant social polarization, accurate and educational information about ethnic minorities is crucial in shaping a fair, inclusive, and peaceful society.

Method

This study focuses on the social media platform Instagram, which in January 2024 was recorded as the second most used platform in Indonesia out of 185.3 million internet

users (Kemp Simon, 2024). Instagram was chosen because it supports various visual and audiovisual content formats that are effective in digital communication (Leaver et al., 2020). In particular, the study highlights the @*chinese_server* account with more than 36 thousand followers, which consistently introduces Chinese culture in Indonesia, as reflected in the account's bio: *"Chinese History & Culture in Indonesia. Not an expert, just care, so sharing."*

This study uses a content analysis design with a qualitative approach. Both were chosen because they focus on repion and valid conclusions based on analyzing a text or other meaningful form of communication in the context of its use (Krippendorff, 2018). The data sources came from video narrative transcripts, captions, and user comments on the Instagram account @*chinese_server*, which were used to understand the content of the videos' messages and the users' responses. These are important aspects of content analysis research, covering structure, meaning, interaction, and social behavior (Herring, 2004, 2010; Mayring, 2000). Data analysis techniques were carried out in four stages, namely content selection, analysis using Transkriptor, Voyant Tools, and Excel applications, interpretation based on theory, and drawing interpretive conclusions that reveal meanings, patterns, and trends in digital communication (Parker et al., 201; Dinakar et al., 2015; Hangya & Farkas, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Research Findings

Based on information from the @*chinese_server* account biography, the account is privately owned by Randy and was created in July 2020. @*chinese_server* has been around for approximately four years and has 36.9 thousand followers and 347 posts, almost all short videos. The Instagram account @*chinese_server* presents content about Chinese history and culture in Indonesia, including various negative sentiments that persist. Hopefully, this content can be used to overcome multicultural issues in Indonesia.

In accordance with the research question, this study focuses only on analyzing video content that discusses various negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnicity in Indonesia and the responses of users who interact with the Instagram account @*chinese_server*. The author found 17 pieces of content out of 347 that were perceived to change negative sentiments towards the Chinese community in Indonesia. Content analysis was reviewed based on the message conveyed in each video post, which was then categorized into main themes. In addition, the content analysis also reviewed the frequency of words that often appeared in the narrative of the video content posts and the use of hashtags in the caption section. User response analysis was also carried out using both positive and negative reactions. Positive reactions were shown through likes and shares, while adverse reactions were shown as negative comments in the comments section.

Main Themes of *Chinese-Server* Video Content Posts

Based on the study's results, it appears that the @*chinese_server* account prefers to use short videos/reels to convey messages expressing negative sentiments towards Indonesian Chinese. The average duration of each video is less than two minutes. The video content's audience is not only of Chinese ethnicity but also of other ethnicities, as seen in the comments section.
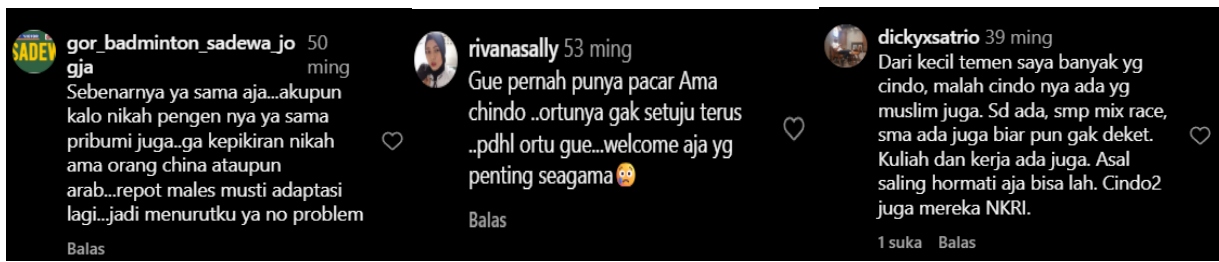
Figure 2. Audience of *Chinese_Server* Video Content from Other Ethnic Groups

In one video titled "Chinese Sukanya Sama Sesama Chinese" (Chinese People Like Other Chinese People), audience comments reveal diverse views on relationships with ethnic Chinese. Some say they are reluctant to marry because of difficulties adapting, family norms constrain some, while others share experiences of inclusive friendships with many Chinese friends, including Muslims. These responses show that @*chinese_server* content attracts Chinese audiences and other ethnic groups who feel connected to the topics discussed.

Each video published contains a specific message to address multicultural issues and negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnicity. Through this strategy, @*chinese_server* hopes to encourage empathy, understanding, and a change in attitude among people who previously held negative prejudices. Based on the content analysis results, four main themes of negative sentiment were raised through the videos.

Table 1. Results of Content Analysis of Negative Stereotypes Against Ethnic Chinese in *Chinese_Server* Video Posts

Negative Stereotypes	Video Title	Video Duration	Posting Date
Indonesian ethnic Chinese are considered pro-PRC	When Language Becomes Politicized	01.27	January 14, 2023
	The Terms "China" or "Chinese"	03.00	September 9, 2024
Many ethnic Chinese descendants are considered exclusive and unable to integrate with the local community.	Assimilation or Integration	00:45	November 29, 2023
	High Fences Around Chinese Houses	01:24	January 3, 2024
	United in the Spirit of Lontong Cap Go Meh	12:32	January 21, 2024
	United in the Flavor of Wedang Ronde	00:39	January 23, 2024
	United in the Flavor of Chicken Porridge	00:38	January 25, 2024
	Chinese Love Among Chinese People	01:22	May 11, 2024
	The Price of Assimilation	02:59	July 14, 2024
	Why Chindo Wears a Kebaya	01:12	July 27, 2024
	Learning from Tahu Pong	01.01	October 5, 2024

Negative Stereotypes	Video Title	Video Duration	Posting Date
Indonesian ethnic Chinese are considered to lack nationalism.	History Proves That Without the Chinese Ethnic Group, Indonesia Can Still Thrive	00:51	December 16, 2023
	Chinese in the Indonesian Navy	00:57	July 2, 2024
	Awaiting Yemen and China to Unite		August 18, 2024
Indonesian ethnic Chinese descendants are considered atheists/ non-religious	Temples as Witnesses to Unrest	March 1	August 27, 2024
	A Glimpse of the God Statue	01.17	August 31, 2024
	Are Chinese People Really Atheists?	01:08	September 6, 2024

The theme of negative sentiment towards the Chinese ethnic group in Indonesia, which is considered pro-PRC, is represented in two videos from the *@chinese_server* account. The video "When Language is Politicized" emphasizes that Mandarin language skills are irrelevant in assessing political loyalty, as most Indonesian Chinese are no longer fluent in Mandarin. The small minority who still speak it only use it for business with Chinese citizens. In contrast, in their daily interactions, they mostly use the languages of their ancestors (such as Hokkien and Teochew), local languages, or Indonesian. The video "Sebutan China atau Tionghoa" (The Terms Chinese or Tionghoa) highlights the change in terminology after the reform era, when the term "Tionghoa" was chosen to replace "Cina" as a safer form of political language, even though its discriminatory meaning still depends on the speaker's intention.

Another theme is the assumption that the Chinese ethnic group is too exclusive and difficult to blend in with the local community. Through its content, *@chinese_server* refutes this sentiment by presenting evidence of acculturation in cuisine, marriage, and fashion. For example, lontong cap go meh, chicken porridge, and wedang ronde are Chinese cuisines adapted to local tastes. In the video "Chinese Sukanya Sama Sesama Chinese" (Chinese People Like Other Chinese People), the creator emphasizes that the tendency to marry within one's own ethnic group is not exclusive to the Chinese, but rather a universal phenomenon. Regarding fashion, the video "Kok Chindo Pake Kebaya" (Why Do Chinese People Wear Kebaya?) features the kebaya peranakan as a symbol of the fusion of Chinese and Indonesian cultures that needs to be preserved.

Another negative sentiment is the assumption that the Chinese ethnic group is not nationalistic. The lack of historical narratives about the Chinese contribution to the independence struggle reinforces this misperception (Ubaedillah, 2023). Through several videos, *@chinese_server* highlights Chinese figures who have contributed to Indonesian history, such as Djiaw Kie Siong, whose house was used as a place to kidnap Soekarno-Hatta by young people ahead of the proclamation, and Rear Admiral John Lie, who was instrumental in crushing the separatist movement. This narrative emphasizes that the Chinese ethnic group has made a real contribution to the nation, so the perception of them as a group that lacks nationalism needs to be corrected.

The last negative sentiment identified is the assumption that ethnic Chinese are non-religious or atheists. The video content explains that Indonesian ethnic Chinese have their own traditions of belief, which are even more ritualistic than those of Chinese people in mainland China or Taiwan. One example is the Gotong Toapekong procession at the Boen Tek Bio Temple in Tangerang, which is held once every 12 years. In addition, some Indonesian Chinese also adhere to other religions, such as Islam. This religious diversity shows a wealth of beliefs, not a lack of religiosity (Fadhilatunnisa et al., 2022). However, the video also acknowledges that there are Indonesian Chinese individuals who are atheists, but this cannot be generalized.

The study results show that the *@chinese_server* account uses short videos/reels to respond to and deconstruct negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnicity. Content analysis reveals four main themes: accusations of being pro-PRC, exclusive, unpatriotic, and atheist. With an educational approach based on historical narratives and social experiences, this content can attract the attention of cross-ethnic audiences, as seen in the interactions in the comments section. Thus, *@chinese_server* promotes multicultural understanding and fosters empathy to reduce negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnicity in Indonesia.

Keyword and Hashtag Analysis

Text elements are the most important part of every video content on the *@chinese_server* social media account. Text elements are embedded in the *captions* and narrative transcripts of the videos. Through the use of text, the information to be conveyed can be communicated clearly and deeply. In addition, text can provide additional information that may not be conveyed effectively through visual displays such as videos (Schreiber, 2023).

Figure 3. Use of Text in Video Captions and Narrative Transcripts

For example, in a video post titled *Sebutan China Atau Tionghoa* (The Terms *China or Chinese*). Text elements are embedded in the caption as additional information because the narration in the video is cut off. Meanwhile, text narration is embedded in the video to provide information, one of which is the correct spelling in Mandarin for a term.

Text elements in an Instagram account's posts can also provide an overview of the most dominant discussion topics. The most dominant topic of discussion can be seen from the words that appear most frequently. Through an analysis of the text of the video narrative of negative sentiment towards the Chinese ethnicity in Indonesia posted by the *@chinese_server* account, several dominant words that always appear were found. These dominant words are depicted as *word clouds* using the Voyant Tools application (https://voyant-tools.org/).

Figure 4. Word Clouds Output Voyant Tools

Based on Figure 4, which shows *word clouds* formed from 25 words, there are several dominant words. From the 17 video narratives analyzed, the word "orang" (people) appeared 55 times, the word "china" appeared 48 times, the word "tionghoa" (Chinese) appeared 45 times, the word "indonesia" (Indonesia) appeared 40 times, and the word "bahasa" (language) appeared 30 times. These five dominant words are larger than the others because they appear most frequently. In addition to *word clouds*, trend analysis was conducted to illustrate the frequency of words appearing in each corpus and the relationship between words. Corpus refers to the sequence of video content narratives. There are 17 corpora in total. The frequency of words in each corpus can be illustrated through the graph below.
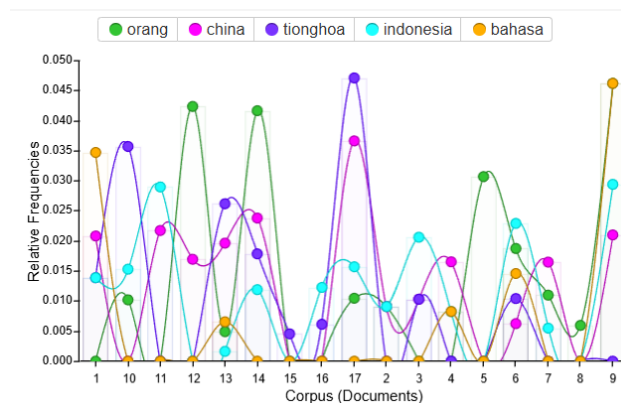

Figure 5. Word Trends for Each Corpus and Relative Frequency

Trend analysis shows the correlation between the words "orang" (people), "China," and "Tionghoa" (Chinese), which often appear together in corpora 13, 14, 17, and 6, referring to discussions about ethnicity. In the video "Sebutan China atau Tionghoa" (corpus 13), the term "China," which was initially neutral, became negative, then was replaced with "Tionghoa" during the era of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in an effort to reduce racism. However, the new term can still be used in a discriminatory context, so the @ *chinese_server* account emphasizes the importance of eliminating covert racism rather than simply replacing terms.

The word "Indonesia" appears more evenly but with low frequency, often associated with the terms "people" and "language" in discussions of national identity. The word

"language" appears in almost the entire corpus with the highest frequency in the video "Ketika Bahasa Dipolitisasi" (When Language is Politicized) (corpus 9), which discusses the sentiment that Chinese people are considered pro-PRC because they can speak Mandarin, even though the majority no longer speak it and use regional languages and Indonesian more. These findings show that the combination of the words "people," "China," "Chinese," and "Indonesia" marks the themes of ethnic identity, social issues, and intergroup relations. At the same time, "language" emphasizes communication, even though it is not the central theme.

In addition, hashtags (#) are an important strategy in content distribution on Instagram. Hashtags allow information to spread more quickly and increase reach, even for accounts with limited followers (Sun et al., 2022). This is also done by the *@chinese_server* account, which consistently uses several hashtags, although not all videos are accompanied by hashtags.

Table 1. Frequency of Hashtag Usage from a Total of 15 Videos

Hashtag (#)	Number of Uses per Hashtag (#)
8	#Chinese
8	#Chindo
9	#Chinese
9	#History
6	#History
2	#Chinatown
2	#Chinatown
1	#ethnicity
5	#Indonesia
1	#Glodok
3	#Food
2	#Acculturation
1	#Lontong
1	#LontongVegetables
1	#LontongCapGoMeh
1	#CapGoMeh
2	#IndonesianFood
1	#Wedang
1	#WedangRonde
1	#Porridge
1	#chickenporridge
1	#congee
1	#chinesefood
1	#Language
1	#Orba
1	#fyp
1	#Peranakan
1	#IndonesianKebaya

Hashtag (#)	Number of Uses per Hashtag (#)
1	#ChineseCulture
1	#ChineseTradition
1	#IndonesianChinese
1	#funlearning
1	#funhistory

Source: Research Results

Of the various hashtags used, some of the most frequently appearing are #Chinese (8), #Chindo (8), #Tionghoa (9), and #Sejarah (9). The consistent use of these hashtags confirms the suitability of the content with the character of the *@chinese_server* account, which focuses on Chinese history and culture in Indonesia and reaches audiences interested in these topics. In addition, hashtags serve to group content by category. For example, in the video "Bersatu Dalam Rasa Bubur Ayam" (United in the Taste of Chicken Porridge), in addition to using the prominent hashtags (#Chinese, #Chindo, #Tionghoa, #Sejarah), hashtags related to culinary topics such as chicken porridge are also included to emphasize the theme of Chinese and Indonesian cultural acculturation.

Figure 6. Video post *Bersatu Dalam Rasa Bubur Ayam*

In the video "Bersatu Dalam Rasa Bubur Ayam," we can see how hashtags (#) build connections between content. Hashtags such as #buburayam, #congee, and #makananindonesia emphasize chicken porridge as a local culinary dish, while #akulturasi highlights the mixing of Chinese and Indonesian cultures. The findings show that the hashtag strategy used by *@chinese_server* expands reach, increases audience engagement, and groups content by theme. This account consistently uses relevant hashtags such as #Chinese, #Chindo, #Tionghoa, and #Sejarah, which not only strengthen the account's identity as a medium for Chinese history and culture but also make it easier for audiences to find content based on their interests. Thus, hashtags are complementary and integral to an effective digital communication strategy in managing messages and building account characteristics.

Audience Response: Positive and Negative

Based on observations of interactions in the comments section, there are two types of responses from users: positive and negative. Positive responses are shown through likes and video *shares*. Meanwhile, negative responses are shown in comment sections that contain prejudice, negative sentiments, and even hate speech against the Chinese ethnicity. Responses to *@chinese_server* video content are presented in a table showing the number of

views, *likes*, comments, and *shares*.

Table 2. Responses to Video Content (Number of Views, Likes, Comments, and Shares)

Negative Stereotypes	Video Title	Number of Views	Number of Likes	Number of Comments	Number of Shares
Indonesian ethnic Chinese are considered pro-PRC	When Language is Politicized	17.1 thousand	565	63	36
	The term China or Chinese	9.6 thousand	hidden	53	Hidden
Indonesian ethnic Chinese descendants are considered exclusive and cannot integrate with the local community	Assimilation or Integration	62.7 thousand	1781	255	114
	High Fence Chinese House	47 thousand	1433	85	152
	United in the Spirit of Lontong Cap Go Meh	41.9 thousand	1565	58	175
	United in the Taste of Wedang Ronde	25 thousand	900	9	95
	United in the Taste of Chicken Porridge	30.3 thousand	1444	45	89
	Chinese Love Among Chinese	58 thousand	1515	236	133
	The Price of Assimilation	14 thousand	Hidden	75	Hidden
	Kok Chindo Wearing a Kebaya	61.6 thousand	2268	85	147
	Learning from Tahu Pong	57.1 thousand	2307	366	242
Indonesian ethnic Chinese are considered to lack nationalism.	History Proves that Without the Chinese Ethnic Group, Indonesia Can Still Be Successful	36.2 thousand	114	100	75
	Chinese in the Indonesian Navy	6,300	Hidden	21	Hidden
	Waiting for Yemen and China to Unite	56.2 thousand	2539	406	210

Negative Stereotypes	Video Title	Number of Views	Number of Likes	Number of Comments	Number of Shares
Indonesian ethnic Chinese descendants are considered atheists/non-religious	Temples as witnesses to riots	49.9 thousand	2426	123	154
	A Glimpse of the God Statue	148 thousand	3523	121	592
	Chinese: Are They Really Atheists?	11,700	Hidden	24	Hidden

Based on the study's results, the video "A Glimpse of the God Statue" received the most responses from users interacting on the Instagram account @*chinese_server*. The video has been viewed 148 thousand times, received 3,523 likes, and been shared 592 times. Likes given to a post on social media are a form of positive reinforcement that then influences users' emotional responses (Stsiampkouskaya et al., 2021). Users' Positive emotional responses are demonstrated by sharing content with other users. This is also evident in the video post "A Glimpse of the God Statue." The video has been shared 592 times. The relationship between the likes given by users and emotional responses in the form of shares can be illustrated in Figure 7.
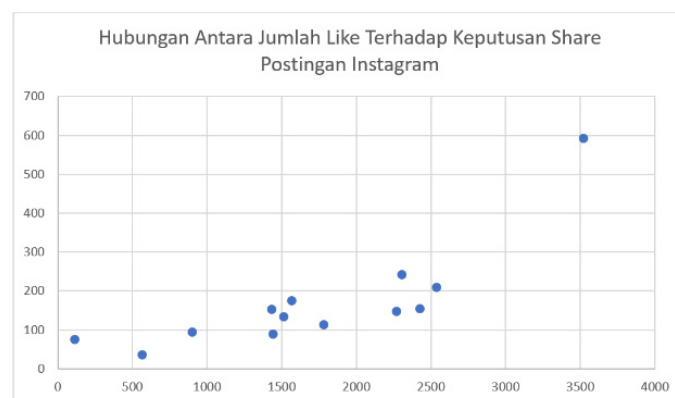
Figure 7. Correlation Between the Number of Likes and the Decision to Share Instagram Content

Based on the scatter plot graph, it can be seen that there is a positive trend between the number of likes and the number of shares. When the number of likes increases, it is followed by increased shares. This can be seen based on the pattern of points pointing to the upper right. This can be seen in the video content of the @*chinese_server* account. This relationship shows that interaction on social media in the form of positive responses, in the form of likes, can influence the act of sharing content, but this relationship is not always absolute. Other factors, such as content or individual preferences, may play an important role. Therefore, further research is needed on this matter.

The video "Selayang Pandang Patung Dewa" (A Glimpse of the God Statue) was recorded as the most popular content with 148 thousand views, showing the audience's great interest in the spiritual aspects of Indonesian Chinese ethnicity. This confirms that the theme of spirituality can be a more profound material to reduce negative sentiments that consider Chinese people to be atheists. Conversely, content about pro-PRC sentiment

was relatively less popular due to low views and interaction numbers. The most lively discussions actually occurred on the theme of Chinese ethnic exclusivity, with several videos such as "Assimilation or Integration" (62,700 views; 255 comments), "Chinese Like Other Chinese" (58 thousand; 236 comments), and "Learning From Tahu Pong" (57.1 thousand; 366 comments) successfully triggered significant audience engagement. The theme of nationalism received mixed responses. The video "History Proves that Without the Chinese Ethnic Group, Indonesia Can Be Successful" received only 36.2 thousand views with limited reactions, while "Waiting for Yemen and China to Unite" was more popular, with 56.2 thousand views, 3,523 likes, and 406 comments. This last video even became the content with the highest number of discussions in the comments section compared to other videos, indicating that the issue of nationalism is still relevant in triggering public debate.

In addition to receiving positive likes and shares, the research also found negative responses from users to the video content posted by *@chinese_server* in the comments section. The negative responses were generally in the form of hate speech. Hate speech is a form of communication that degrades a person or group based on inherent characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, or religion (Tontodimamma et al., 2021). In this context, the hate speech conveyed in the comments section *of @chinese_server* tends to be ethnic in nature. The results of the study found negative responses from Instagram users in the form of hate speech depicted in the comments section related to the characteristics of the Chinese ethnicity. The characteristics in question certainly have negative connotations, for example, as seen in the following comments.
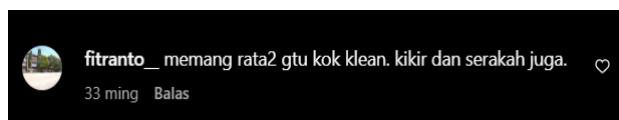

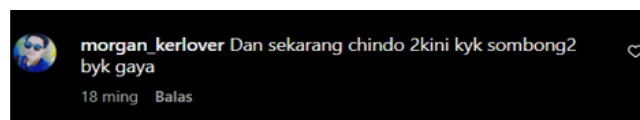Figure 8. Negative Comments Against Characteristics of the Chinese Ethnic Group

Figure 9. Negative Comments Against Characteristics of the Chinese Ethnic Group

Based on these two comments, several hateful remarks were found regarding the characteristics of the Chinese ethnicity, including "stingy," "greedy," and "arrogant." The characteristics of the Chinese ethnicity, such as "stingy" and "greedy," are associated with economic aspects. The emergence of such hate speech is still prevalent today, even though Indonesia has undergone more than 24 years of reform. The negative characteristics attributed to the Indonesian Chinese ethnic group concerning economic aspects were actually constructed by the New Order government and the mass media at that time. The New Order government, which granted economic privileges, coupled with media *framing* that portrayed the Chinese ethnic group as cunning, rich, and greedy, further increased hatred towards them (Hoon, 2011a; Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020). Meanwhile, hate speech that describes the Chinese ethnic group as "arrogant" portrays them as an ethnic group that seems challenging to get along with other ethnic groups, similar to one of the themes discussed by the *@chinese_server* account.

Other hate speech against the Chinese ethnic group depicted in the comments section is related to citizenship. The Chinese ethnic group is considered not part of Indonesia but as foreigners. The following are some of these negative comments.
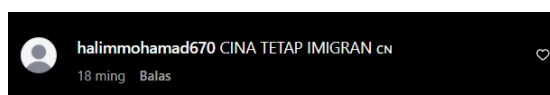
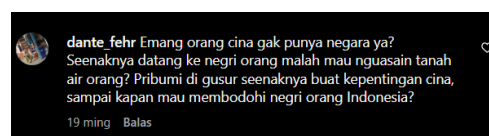| Figure 10. Negative Comments Related to Citizenship | Figure 11. Negative Comments Related to Citizenship |

Based on these two comments, it can be understood that even today, there is still a dichotomy between indigenous and non-indigenous people in relation to citizenship status. Someone who is of Chinese ethnicity, and even though they have been an Indonesian citizen for generations, is still considered an immigrant/non-indigenous person. This phrase shows that there is an attempt to delegitimize their citizenship status. The persistence of this assumption indicates that the influence of historical discrimination during the colonial period still carries over to the present. This then gives rise to accusations, as seen in the comment in Figure 9, that ethnic Chinese are trying to displace other ethnic groups (indigenous people) for their own interests. This comment is clearly categorized as hate speech because it attempts to incite and provoke division among communities.

Discussion

Social media, such as Instagram, is an example of a new media that has emerged due to information and communication technology developments. New media uses digital technology, such as the internet, and enables digital interaction (Manovich, 2003; Wenxiu, 2015). Messages can be transmitted more easily through the internet, and two-way communication between the sender and receiver can occur. Social media such as Instagram can convey specific messages to other users through various types of content, such as videos.

The number of Instagram users in Indonesia, especially among young people, shows significant dominance in the digital media landscape (Kemp Simon, 2024). As one of the leading platforms for disseminating information, Instagram has become a space for developing various social and cultural issues that are then widely discussed by Indonesian netizens (Purwaningtyas et al., 2025). For example, Instagram is used by influencers in the United States to address multicultural issues, such as campaigning for ethnic movements in the form of cultural expression and combating misinformation about certain ethnic groups (Kaviani & Salehi, 2022; King & Fretwell, 2022). A similar thing is also done by an Indonesian Instagram influencer named Randy, who owns the *@chinese_server* account. This Instagram account focuses on content discussing Chinese history and culture in Indonesia. Most of the content is presented in *short videos/reels* with an average duration of less than two minutes. Through short video content packaged using a historical narrative and social experience approach, it is hoped that various negative sentiments attached to the Chinese ethnic community in Indonesia can be rectified. It turns out that these negative sentiments persist as a result of political construction, historical, and media framing during the colonial era and the New Order (Aditjondro GJ, 1998; Tan & Dahana, 1997; Zhou, 2019; Hoon, 2011a; Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020).

The message delivery strategy used by the *@chinese_server* account can be analyzed using the communication model theory proposed by Harold Laswell. In the model he developed, Laswell argued that the appropriate way to describe communication actions is to answer several questions, such as *"Who Says What in Which Channel to Whom with What Effect?"* (Laswell, 1948).

Who - Diversification of Communicator

A message deliverer/communicator in the mass media is not carried out individually but by several organized institutions, such as newspapers, radio stations, television stations, websites, etc. (Wenxiu, 2015). This differs from new media such as Instagram, which can be managed individually. Advances in hardware, such as computers, and software, such as the internet, have led to a shift in communication towards the public, accompanied by opportunities for the wider community to create, publish, and share information (Liu & Guo, 2013). The same thing happened in the management of the *@chinese_server* account. The account is owned and managed individually by a person named Randy, who represents an individual actor but has the capacity as a cultural communicator. The account owner, who is interested in the Chinese ethnicity and is part of it, further strengthens the authority and validity of his narrative.

Says What - Massive Amount of Information

Based on the study's results, the *@chinese_server* account contains several messages it wants to convey through its short video/reels content posts. This aligns with Harold Laswell's effective communication model strategy, specifically the *"Says What?"* component, which emphasizes *what message is being conveyed* in *a massive amount of information* (Wenxiu, 2015). In this context, *Chinese_Server* consistently conveys messages about the negative sentiments that still linger towards ethnic Chinese in Indonesia. These include accusations of being pro-PRC, exclusive, unpatriotic, and atheist. The content of these messages is reinforced by several keywords appearing repeatedly in each video content narrative. The appearance of words such as "Orang" (people), "China," "Tionghoa" (Chinese), and "Indonesia" indicates that the primary focus of the narrative is on ethnic identity and relations between social groups in Indonesia. Although "language" is not the central theme, its appearance in almost all videos shows that linguistic aspects are still considered important in shaping the representation of identity and intercultural communication.

Video content delivered through historical and social experience approaches demonstrates a strategy to strengthen content credibility and attract audience empathy. Text narratives and hashtags also reinforce the dissemination of messages in the massive flow of information on social media, making them part of *a massive amount of information* that educates and attempts to shape public perception in a systematic and targeted manner.

In Which Channel - Interactivity of Media

New media enables the exchange of information in various formats, such as text, audio, and visuals, depending on the type of network used. Instagram and YouTube, for example, are effective for sharing videos, images, and short texts (Barrios-Rubio & Gutiérrez-García, 2022). Since most of *@chinese_server*'s content comprises short videos/reels, Instagram is the appropriate platform. Reels allow for wide distribution to followers and non-followers when shared publicly (Rodríguez Fidalgo et al., 2023). This effectiveness can be seen from the high number of cross-ethnic viewers, especially for atheism-themed content, such as the video "Selayang Pandang Patung Dewa" (A Glimpse of the God Statue), which reached 148,000 views. In addition, new media also provides real-time two-way interaction between users and content creators, such as comments, sharing, and likes (Y. Zhang et al., 2022). On the *@chinese_server* account, these three forms of interaction are clearly visible, where positive likes encourage users to repost content. However, content and individual preferences still influence the engagement level.

To Whom – Personalization of Audience

The study results show that the distribution of messages about Chinese history and culture through video content on the *Chinese_Server* account is directed at a broad and diverse audience. The audience is not limited to the Chinese ethnic group but includes other ethnicities. In the context of effective communication developed by Harold Laswell, the question *"To whom"* covers to whom the message is delivered. What are their characteristics? This is important to building an accurate audience model (Wenxiu, 2015). The findings show that the audience involved in communication includes cross-ethnic groups, indicating an expansion of the target audience from internal groups (ethnic Chinese) to external groups (non-ethnic Chinese). This reflects a communication strategy with a multicultural approach that aims to strengthen the understanding of cultural identity within the Chinese community, while also building bridges of cross-cultural understanding through education. Thus, the *@chinese_server* account has effectively addressed the *"To Whom"* aspect because it can identify and reach a diverse audience and convey relevant cultural messages tailored to each group. For the Chinese ethnic group, this content reinforces their identity and preserves their culture. In contrast, for other ethnic groups, it serves as a means of multicultural education that can help correct various negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnic group and build mutual respect between ethnic groups.

With What Effect – Intelligentialize of Effect

The effect of communication through video content shared by the *@chinese_server* account is dualistic. On the one hand, there is a positive response from the audience in the form of appreciation for the message in the video content, shown by liking and sharing it with other users. However, there is also a negative response in the form of hate speech written in the comments. This affirms the existence of resistance to narratives that attempt to deconstruct negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnic group.

The audience's response to the video content of the *@chinese_server* account regarding correcting negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnic group can be analyzed using the *Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)* theory developed by Milton Bennett. Bennett's model consists of six stages in the development of intercultural sensitivity, which are divided into two groups: ethnocentric (denial, defense, and minimization) and ethnorelative (acceptance, adaptation, and integration) (Bennett & Hammer, 2017). Based on an analysis of the content and user interactions on the *@chinese_server* account, it appears that this account plays an important role in encouraging a shift in the general public's attitude towards the Chinese ethnic group from the stage of ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism.

Denial and *Defense*

The existence of several negative comments attacking the character and citizenship status of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, describing them as greedy, stingy, arrogant, and immigrants, reflects a stage of ethnocentrism. They reject ethnic Chinese as part of Indonesian citizens, even though they have existed in Indonesia for centuries, as explained in the video content *@chinese_server*. This is a form of denial of difference. Meanwhile, the portrayal of the Chinese ethnic group as greedy, stingy, and arrogant is a form of defense. Those who make such comments are trying to attack and defend the cultural superiority of the majority. Words such as "greedy" or "stingy" are defensive stereotypes that create a barrier between "us" and "them." Adding the label of being an "arrogant" ethnic group further reinforces the barrier that they want to build. It is as if the Chinese ethnic group is portrayed as unwilling to associate with other ethnic groups.

Acceptance

Positive interactions in the form of liking and reposting video content to other users are a form of acceptance. At this stage, cultural differences are not only accepted but also appreciated.

Conclusion

As a new media platform, Instagram has developed into a tool for conveying educational messages to resolve multicultural and ethnic identity issues. A study of the @*chinese_server* account shows that as a social media account, it effectively distributes video content, facilitates two-way communication and builds cross-cultural understanding. Using Harold Laswell's communication model, the strategy implemented by this account is considered successful in addressing the five main aspects of communication, namely *Who, Says What, In Which Channel, To Whom*, and *With What Effect*. The @*chinese_server* account, which is managed individually by a Chinese influencer, successfully conveys historical and social narratives in the form of short, engaging, and informative videos. Four main themes regarding negative sentiments towards the Chinese ethnicity are discussed through short video content. The four themes include Chinese ethnicity being pro-PRC, exclusive, non-nationalistic, and atheistic.

The video content is targeted not only at the internal Chinese ethnic community but also at audiences from various backgrounds and other ethnic groups. The effectiveness of the message is demonstrated by the high level of user engagement (*likes,* comments, and *shares*) and the shift in audience attitudes from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism based on the DMIS framework. However, resistance still arises through negative comments that reflect historical prejudices that still linger. Therefore, the role of social media in multicultural education is important, not only as a means of conveying information, but also as a space for dialogue and identity reconstruction to create a more inclusive understanding between ethnic groups in Indonesia.

Acknowledgements

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