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RESEARCH ARTICLE

**SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES OF PT. MINESKI INDONESIA
IN ENHANCING AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT DURING THE MOBILE LEGENDS
PROFESSIONAL LEAGUE INDONESIA SEASON 15**

Ferrari Lancia¹ and Saba Putra Drajat²

1. Lecturer, Faculty of Communication and Language, Bina Sarana Informatika University. Indonesia.
2. Student, Faculty of Communication and Language, Bina Sarana Informatika University. Indonesia.

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Abstract

The rapid growth of social media has transformed communication practices within the esports industry, shifting the focus from one-way information dissemination toward interactive and engagement-driven strategies. This study examines the social media communication strategies employed by PT. Mineski Indonesia to enhance audience engagement during the Mobile Legends Professional League (MPL) Indonesia Season 15. Adopting a qualitative case study approach within a constructivist paradigm, data were collected through in-depth interviews with the social media team and active audience members, non-participant observation of Instagram and TikTok content, and document analysis of social media posts and interactions. The findings reveal that audience engagement was generated through an integrated strategy combining informational relevance, entertainment-oriented content, and interactive communication practices. Instagram functioned primarily as an information and identity-building platform, while TikTok was strategically utilized to deliver entertaining, emotionally engaging, and trend-based content that encouraged participation. Active interaction by social media administrators, including direct responses to comments and the use of interactive features, strengthened emotional closeness and fostered community involvement. The study confirms that audience engagement in esports is a multidimensional and relational process shaped by the fulfilment of information, entertainment, social interaction, and escapism needs, as explained by the Uses and Gratifications framework. These findings contribute to digital communication scholarship and provide practical insights for esports organizers in designing effective social media engagement strategies.

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Introduction:-

The rapid growth of social media platforms, particularly short-form video applications, has fundamentally transformed organizational communication strategies from one-way information dissemination into interactive,

Corresponding Author:- Ferrari Lancia

Address:-Lecturer, Faculty of Communication and Language, Bina Sarana Informatika University. Indonesia.

participatory, and engagement-oriented practices (Abbasi et al., 2025). Contemporary digital communication emphasizes not only content visibility but also the ability of organizations to stimulate sustained audience interaction through likes, comments, shares, and user-generated content, which collectively define audience engagement in digital environments (Liu et al., 2021). This shift requires organizations to carefully design communication strategies that integrate message content, platform affordances, and audience participation mechanisms to remain relevant in competitive digital ecosystems (Lu & Lin, 2022).

In recent years, short-form video platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels have reshaped patterns of media consumption by promoting rapid scrolling, algorithmic personalization, and repetitive exposure, thereby altering how attention and engagement are generated and maintained (Alruwaili, 2025). Studies indicate that engagement on these platforms is strongly influenced by entertainment value, trend alignment, emotional stimulation, and interactive features embedded within content formats (Zeng et al., 2025). Consequently, organizations must adopt communication strategies that are not only informative but also emotionally resonant and culturally aligned with platform-specific norms (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021).

Within the esports industry, social media has emerged as a central arena for building relationships between event organizers, professional teams, players, and audiences (Kennedy & Funk, 2023). Esports audiences are not passive spectators; rather, they actively engage in discussions, identity construction, and community-building through digital platforms surrounding tournaments and leagues (Calapez et al., 2024). Social media thus functions as a connective infrastructure that links live competition, mediated content, and fan communities into a continuous engagement cycle (Huang et al., 2024).

Research on esports consumption highlights that audience engagement is closely associated with fan identity, emotional attachment, and perceived authenticity of communication (Noh et al., 2025). Social media content such as match highlights, behind-the-scenes footage, and interactive posts enables audiences to express loyalty, demonstrate expertise, and reinforce their belonging to esports communities (Polyakova et al., 2024). As a result, communication strategies in esports increasingly focus on fostering participation and emotional closeness rather than merely broadcasting match information (Pagáč et al., 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, the Uses and Gratifications framework provides a valuable lens for understanding audience engagement in digital and esports contexts (Yang & Ha, 2021). This theory conceptualizes audiences as active agents who selectively use media to satisfy specific needs, including information acquisition, entertainment, social interaction, identity formation, and escapism (Wang & Oh, 2023). In social media environments, these gratifications are often amplified by platform features such as algorithmic recommendation systems, participatory content tools, and interactive feedback loops (Majumdar & Prakash, 2023).

Empirical studies demonstrate that social media marketing activities designed to meet audience gratifications significantly enhance engagement and behavioral intentions, particularly among younger digital-native audiences (Khan, 2022). In esports settings, gratification-driven content has been shown to increase not only immediate engagement metrics but also long-term loyalty and advocacy behaviors (Khan et al., 2023). These findings suggest that effective communication strategies must align content design with audience motivations and platform cultures to generate meaningful engagement outcomes (Zhang et al., 2023).

Visual and audiovisual design elements also play a crucial role in shaping engagement on short-form video platforms (Qi et al., 2024). Research indicates that video rhythm, visual complexity, and emotional cues significantly influence viewers' willingness to comment, share, and participate in online interactions (Fu et al., 2024). Accordingly, esports organizations are increasingly required to invest in professional content production and strategic message framing to stand out in saturated digital environments (Abbasi et al., 2025).

Despite growing scholarship on social media engagement and esports marketing, there remains a need for in-depth, organization-level case studies that examine how communication strategies are practically formulated and implemented across platforms within specific competitive contexts (Kennedy & Funk, 2023). In particular, limited research has explored how event organizers integrate content planning, community interaction, and platform differentiation to enhance engagement during a single competitive season (Calapez et al., 2024). Addressing this gap is essential to better understand the mechanisms through which social media communication strategies translate into measurable audience engagement outcomes (Pagáč et al., 2025).

Against this backdrop, the Mobile Legends Professional League Indonesia Season 15 provides a relevant empirical context for examining social media communication strategies in the esports industry. As the organizer, PT. Mineski Indonesia actively utilizes Instagram and TikTok to distribute information, entertain audiences, stimulate interaction, and cultivate digital communities around the league (Huang et al., 2024). Analyzing these strategies offers valuable insights into how esports event organizers leverage social media to enhance audience engagement while responding to evolving platform dynamics and audience expectations (Noh et al., 2025).

Research Methods:-

Research Paradigm and Approach:-

This study adopts a constructivist research paradigm, which views social reality as socially constructed through interaction, interpretation, and shared meaning rather than as an objective and fixed entity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Within this paradigm, meaning is generated through communication practices, experiences, and interpretations of social actors involved in specific contexts. The constructivist perspective is particularly suitable for communication research that seeks to understand how strategies are designed, enacted, and interpreted by both communicators and audiences in digital environments (Bungin, 2020).

Based on this paradigm, the research employs a qualitative approach, aiming to obtain an in-depth understanding of social media communication strategies implemented by PT. Mineski Indonesia and how these strategies contribute to audience engagement during the Mobile Legends Professional League (MPL) Indonesia Season 15. Qualitative research enables the exploration of processes, meanings, and contextual dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement alone (Flick, 2018).

Research Design:-

The study utilizes a descriptive qualitative case study design. A case study allows researchers to examine a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018). This design is appropriate because the communication strategies of PT. Mineski Indonesia are embedded within the specific organizational, cultural, and temporal context of MPL Indonesia Season 15.

The case study approach facilitates a holistic analysis of communication practices, including content planning, platform utilization, interaction patterns, and audience responses across Instagram and TikTok. By focusing on a single case, the research aims to generate rich, contextualized insights that contribute to theoretical understanding and practical implications for social media communication in the esports industry (Stake, 2015).

Research Object and Unit of Analysis:-

The object of this research is the social media communication strategy implemented by PT. Mineski Indonesia in enhancing audience engagement during MPL Indonesia Season 15. The strategy encompasses content creation, message framing, interaction management, and the utilization of platform-specific features on Instagram and TikTok.

The unit of analysis includes:

1. Communication practices of the social media team of PT. Mineski Indonesia.
2. Social media content related to MPL Indonesia Season 15 published on Instagram and TikTok.
3. Audience interactions with the content, including comments, likes, shares, and participatory activities such as challenges and user-generated content.

Research Subjects and Informants:-

Research subjects consist of individuals directly involved in the planning and execution of social media communication strategies as well as audiences who actively engage with MPL Indonesia content.

- Key informant: A member of the PT. Mineski Indonesia social media team responsible for content strategy and audience interaction during MPL Indonesia Season 15.
- Supporting informants: Selected audience members who actively interact with MPL Indonesia's Instagram and TikTok content through comments, shares, or participation in interactive features.

Informant selection follows a purposive sampling technique, whereby participants are chosen based on their relevance, involvement, and capacity to provide rich information related to the research objectives (Palinkas et al., 2015).

Data Collection Techniques:-

Data collection is conducted using multiple qualitative techniques to ensure depth and credibility through data triangulation:-

1. In-depth Interviews:-

Semi-structured interviews are conducted with the key informant and supporting informants. This interview format allows flexibility to explore predetermined themes while providing space for informants to elaborate on experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of social media communication strategies and engagement (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Interview guides focus on content planning processes, strategic objectives, interaction management, perceived audience responses, and engagement outcomes.

2. Non-participant Observation:-

The researcher observes social media activity on Instagram and TikTok during MPL Indonesia Season 15. Observations include content types, posting frequency, interaction patterns, use of platform features, and audience responses. This technique enables the researcher to capture natural communication practices without interfering with ongoing interactions (Flick, 2018).

3. Document and Content Analysis:-

Documentation includes screenshots, videos, captions, hashtags, and interaction metrics from Instagram and TikTok posts related to MPL Indonesia Season 15. These materials are analyzed to identify recurring themes, message patterns, and strategic elements used to stimulate audience engagement. Content analysis supports systematic interpretation of communication artifacts within their digital context (Bowen, 2009).

Data Analysis Technique:-

Data analysis follows a thematic analysis process, allowing the identification, organization, and interpretation of patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

The analysis proceeds through several stages:

1. Data Familiarization:-

Transcribed interview data, observation notes, and social media documents are read repeatedly to gain comprehensive understanding.

2. Initial Coding:-

Relevant data segments are coded based on emerging concepts related to communication strategies, audience engagement, and platform utilization.

3. Theme Development:-

Codes are grouped into broader themes reflecting strategic communication dimensions such as content relevance, interactivity, emotional appeal, and platform differentiation.

4. Theoretical Interpretation:-

Themes are interpreted using the Uses and Gratifications framework and audience engagement theory to explain how communication strategies fulfill audience needs and stimulate engagement behaviors.

Trustworthiness and Data Validity:-

To ensure research rigor, the study applies criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility is enhanced through triangulation of interviews, observations, and document analysis. Transferability is supported by detailed contextual descriptions of the case. Dependability and confirmability are ensured through systematic documentation of research procedures and analytical decisions.

Ethical Considerations:-

Ethical principles are observed throughout the research process. Informants provide informed consent prior to participation, and confidentiality is maintained by anonymizing personal identifiers where necessary. Data obtained

from social media platforms are analyzed solely for academic purposes, respecting platform policies and ethical research standards (British Psychological Society, 2021).

Results and Discussion:-

Overview of Empirical Findings:-

This study examines how PT. Mineski Indonesia designed and implemented social media communication strategies to enhance audience engagement during the Mobile Legends Professional League (MPL) Indonesia Season 15. Based on in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and content analysis of Instagram and TikTok posts, the findings indicate that audience engagement was not generated by a single tactical element but rather through an integrated communication strategy combining content relevance, platform differentiation, interaction management, and audience participation. These strategies collectively addressed multiple audience needs, aligning closely with the Uses and Gratifications framework.

The discussion below is organized into four main thematic findings:

- (1) content relevance and informational value,
- (2) entertainment-oriented content and emotional engagement,
- (3) interactive communication and community involvement, and
- (4) platform-specific strategic differentiation.

Content Relevance and Informational Value:-

Empirical findings show that informational content played a foundational role in sustaining audience engagement throughout MPL Indonesia Season 15. PT. Mineski Indonesia consistently published match schedules, team lineups, standings, and result summaries, particularly on Instagram, which functioned as the primary information hub for audiences. Informants from the social media team emphasized that informational accuracy and timeliness were prioritized to ensure that audiences perceived the official social media accounts as reliable reference points.

Audience interviews revealed that such informational content fulfilled cognitive needs related to understanding tournament progression and competitive dynamics. Many respondents reported routinely checking Instagram before and after matches to confirm schedules and results. This behavior indicates that informational relevance served as an entry point for engagement, encouraging repeated visits and baseline interaction through likes and comments. These findings support previous research suggesting that information gratification is a core driver of sustained engagement in sports and esports communication contexts.

Entertainment-Oriented Content and Emotional Engagement:-

Beyond information dissemination, entertainment-oriented content emerged as a dominant factor in intensifying audience engagement. Observational data show that match highlights, dramatic in-game moments, humorous edits, and behind-the-scenes footage generated significantly higher interaction rates compared to purely informational posts. TikTok, in particular, was used to amplify emotional appeal through short-form videos aligned with trending audio, memes, and platform-native humor.

Interview data indicate that audiences perceived entertainment content as enhancing emotional closeness with the league and its players. Respondents frequently described feelings of excitement, amusement, and emotional attachment when consuming highlight videos or behind-the-scenes clips. This emotional engagement translated into active behaviors such as commenting, sharing content with peers, and creating user-generated responses. These findings reinforce the notion that emotional stimulation is a critical dimension of audience engagement, especially within entertainment-driven digital environments such as esports.

Interactive Communication and Community Involvement:-

A key empirical finding relates to the role of interaction management in strengthening audience engagement. PT. Mineski Indonesia actively utilized interactive features, including comment replies, polls, question stickers, and TikTok challenges. Social media administrators regularly responded to audience comments using informal and conversational language, which audiences interpreted as a sign of accessibility and recognition.

Audience informants highlighted that direct responses from administrators increased their willingness to engage further, as they felt acknowledged and valued. Interactive content also stimulated peer-to-peer interaction among audience members, transforming comment sections into spaces for discussion, debate, and shared enthusiasm. This

dynamic indicates that engagement extended beyond individual reactions toward collective community participation. Such findings align with engagement theory, which emphasizes two-way communication and relational interaction as essential components of meaningful audience involvement.

Platform-Specific Strategic Differentiation:-

The findings demonstrate a clear strategic differentiation between Instagram and TikTok. Instagram was primarily used for structured, visually consistent, and information-rich content, reinforcing the league’s professional image. In contrast, TikTok was positioned as an experimental and entertainment-driven platform, prioritizing virality, humor, and trend participation.

This differentiation allowed PT. Mineski Indonesia to address diverse audience motivations across platforms. Instagram satisfied information-seeking and identity-related needs, while TikTok fulfilled entertainment and escapism needs. The strategic alignment of content types with platform affordances contributed to broader reach and deeper engagement, as evidenced by higher comment volumes and audience participation on TikTok compared to Instagram.

Summary of Key Findings:-

The main findings are summarized in Table 1, which maps empirical observations to engagement dimensions and theoretical interpretations.

Table 1. Summary of Findings on Social Media Communication Strategies and Audience Engagement

StrategicDimension	EmpiricalFindings	EngagementOutcome	TheoreticalInterpretation
InformationalContent	Timelymatchschedules, results, standings	Repeatedvisits, baselineinteraction	Informationgratification
Entertainment Content	Highlights, humor, behind-the-scenesvideos	Highlikes, shares, emotionalresponses	Entertainment gratification
InteractiveCommunication	Commentreplies, polls, challenges	Activeparticipation, communitydiscussion	Socialinteractiongratification
Platform Differentiation	Instagram forinformation, TikTokforentertainment	Broaderreach, platform-appropriateengagement	Multi-gratificationfulfillment

The results indicate that audience engagement during MPL Indonesia Season 15 was the outcome of an integrated communication strategy rather than isolated content tactics. By combining informational reliability with emotionally engaging and interactive content, PT. Mineski Indonesia successfully addressed multiple audience gratifications simultaneously. This supports the Uses and Gratifications perspective, which conceptualizes audiences as active agents who engage with media based on the fulfillment of specific needs.

Furthermore, the strategic differentiation between Instagram and TikTok highlights the importance of platform sensitivity in contemporary digital communication. Rather than replicating identical content across platforms, PT. Mineski Indonesia adapted its communication style to align with platform cultures, thereby enhancing engagement effectiveness. This finding contributes to existing literature by demonstrating how esports organizations can operationalize engagement theory within real-world social media practices.

Overall, the findings suggest that effective social media communication in esports requires not only creative content but also relational management and strategic coherence across platforms. Audience engagement emerges as a relational and processual phenomenon, shaped by continuous interaction between content, communicators, and audiences within dynamic digital environments.

Conclusion:-

This study concludes that the social media communication strategies implemented by PT. Mineski Indonesia during the Mobile Legends Professional League (MPL) Indonesia Season 15 were effective in enhancing audience engagement through an integrated and audience-centered approach. The findings demonstrate that engagement was generated not merely by the frequency of content distribution, but by the strategic alignment of informational accuracy, entertainment value, and interactive communication practices. By consistently providing timely tournament information, emotionally engaging content, and responsive interaction, PT. Mineski Indonesia succeeded in

positioning its social media platforms as both reliable information sources and vibrant community spaces for esports audiences.

From a theoretical perspective, the results reinforce the applicability of the Uses and Gratifications framework in contemporary esports and social media contexts. Audience engagement emerged as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by the fulfillment of information, entertainment, social interaction, and escapism needs across different platforms. The strategic differentiation between Instagram and TikTok further illustrates how platform-specific affordances mediate the realization of these gratifications, with Instagram supporting informational and identity-oriented engagement, while TikTok amplifies entertainment and emotional involvement. This finding contributes to communication scholarship by demonstrating how gratification-based theories can be operationalized in practical social media strategies within digital entertainment industries.

Practically, this study offers important implications for esports organizers and digital communication practitioners. Effective audience engagement requires a coherent strategy that integrates content relevance, emotional storytelling, and sustained two-way interaction rather than isolated or purely promotional tactics. Esports organizations are encouraged to tailor content to platform cultures, actively manage community interactions, and continuously adapt strategies based on audience feedback and engagement patterns. Future research may extend this study by employing comparative or longitudinal designs to examine how social media communication strategies evolve across seasons or differ across esports titles, thereby enriching understanding of sustainable audience engagement in rapidly changing digital ecosystems.

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