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ASSESSING THE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES OF INDONESIA'S TOP 5 UNIVERSITIES ON INSTAGRAM

Deni Adha Akbari [1]*, Eti Rochaety [2], Mulyaning Wulan [3], Diah Purwandari [4], Fanina Adji[5]

[1,2,3,4,5] Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka, Jakarta, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: deni@uhamka.ac.id

Abstract: This research aims to assess the engagement strategies of Indonesia's top 5 universities on Instagram, analysing how these strategies enhance interaction with the audience. Utilizing a combination of content analysis and machine learning, the study scrutinizes various elements like posting frequency, content type, and usage of hashtags. The findings reveal that strategic content placement, emotional appeal, and the incorporation of interactive elements significantly bolster engagement. These strategies are particularly effective in fostering a vibrant academic community and enhancing the universities' outreach efforts. This study contributes to the understanding of digital engagement in higher education and offers actionable insights for optimizing social media marketing strategies.
Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Higher Education, Instagram Engagement, Content Analysis, Machine Learning

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menilai strategi keterlibatan dari 5 universitas terkemuka di Indonesia di Instagram, menganalisis bagaimana strategi ini meningkatkan interaksi dengan audiens. Dengan menggunakan kombinasi analisis konten dan pembelajaran mesin, studi ini meneliti berbagai elemen seperti frekuensi posting, jenis konten, dan penggunaan hashtag. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa penempatan konten strategis, daya tarik emosional, dan penyertaan elemen interaktif secara signifikan meningkatkan keterlibatan. Strategi ini terutama efektif dalam membina komunitas akademik yang dinamis dan meningkatkan upaya jangkauan universitas. Penelitian ini memberikan pemahaman tentang keterlibatan digital dalam pendidikan tinggi dan menawarkan wawasan praktis untuk mengoptimalkan strategi pemasaran media sosial.
Kata Kunci: Pemasaran Media Sosial, Pendidikan Tinggi, Keterlibatan Instagram, Analisis Konten, Pembelajaran Mesin

INTRODUCTION

Recent studies highlight the growing importance of Instagram for university marketing and engagement strategies. Indonesian universities leverage Instagram to showcase campus

life, events, and academic programs (Ramadanty & Syafganti, 2021; Ramadanty et al., 2020). Content analysis reveals that visual aesthetics, message orientation, and content types significantly influence engagement levels (Kusumasondjaja et al., 2023; Wahid & Gunarto, 2022). Popular content categories include events, campus life, and COVID-19 information (Ramadanty & Syafganti, 2021; Clark et al., 2017) Factors driving engagement include carousel formats, achievement sharing, and informational content (Wahid & Gunarto, 2022). Universities globally use Instagram to foster stakeholder relationships, with engagement patterns varying between institutions (Quijada et al., 2022; Bonilla et al., 2020; Kusumawati, 2019). Effective strategies involve consistent posting, emotional content, and theme selection (Marwa et al., 2023; Juhaidi et al., 2024). Overall, Instagram serves as a crucial tool for universities to connect with prospective students, alumni, and the wider community (Kurniawan et al., 2020).

Content analysis and machine learning techniques have been employed to understand engagement patterns, revealing that contextual features like posting time and content features such as specific words and image classifications can significantly affect likes and comments (Farrel et al., 2022). These findings offer valuable insights for higher education marketing strategies on social media platforms. Visual elements, particularly high-quality images, tend to increase engagement (Shin et al., 2016; Jaakonmäki et al., 2017; Hu et al., 2014; Rosli & Husin, 2019). Posts about athletics, campus events, and student accomplishments generally receive more interaction (Peruta & Shields, 2018; Frey et al., 2013).

The use of user-generated content and personal, emotional, or humorous posts also enhances engagement (Peruta & Shields, 2018; Frey et al., 2013). However, content requiring significant concentration may decrease engagement (Shin et al., 2016). Posting frequency and consistency in branding across platforms are important factors (Peruta & Shields, 2018; Eger & Gangur, 2024) Analytics tools help identify successful strategies and areas for improvement (Alfonzo, 2023; Oliveira & Figueira, 2015) These insights can guide social media managers in creating effective content that resonates with their target audience, primarily consisting of current students, prospective students, and alumni (Peruta & Shields, 2018; Eger & Gangur, 2024).

Table 1 Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

No	University	Follower	Post	Link
	Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024			
1	UGM	1,307,248	2,622	https://www.instagram.com/ugm.yogyakarta
2	UI	1,002,354	3,778	https://www.instagram.com/univ_indonesia
3	UB	527,083	3,354	https://www.instagram.com/univ.brawijaya
4	ITB	474,135	4,047	https://www.instagram.com/itb1920
5	UNPAD	472,816	6,945	https://www.instagram.com/universitaspadjadjaran

Source: UniRank (2024)

The purpose of this research is twofold: to document and analyze the current engagement strategies of the top 5 Indonesian universities on Instagram and to identify best practices that could enhance their social media efficacy (Table 1). The universities—Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Universitas Indonesia (UI), Universitas Brawijaya (UB), Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), and Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD). It seeks to provide actionable recommendations that can be employed not only by these institutions but also by other universities looking to improve their social media engagement. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on digital marketing in higher education, offering a clearer understanding of how Instagram can be utilized to foster a vibrant academic community and enhance educational outreach.

METHOD

To effectively assess the engagement strategies of Indonesia's top 5 universities on Instagram, a comprehensive and systematic methodology is employed. Recent studies have examined Instagram engagement strategies of universities, particularly in Indonesia. Research indicates that content type, visual aesthetics, and message orientation significantly impact engagement levels (Kusumasondjaja et al., 2023; Quijada et al., 2022) Universities commonly use Instagram for marketing, posting photos and videos with captions to attract prospective students (Ramadanty & Syafganti, 2021; Sarbani & Lestari, 2022; Kurniawan et al., 2020). Factors influencing engagement include post timing, content themes, and emotional appeal (Farrel et al., 2022; Marwa et al., 2023). Carousel formats, achievement-related content, and embedded questions tend to increase likes and comments, while transactional and rational content may decrease engagement (Wahid & Gunarto, 2022; Thorgren et al., 2024). To effectively assess engagement strategies, researchers have employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, including content analysis, machine learning algorithms, and statistical

modeling (Quijada et al., 2022; Farrel et al., 2022; Santosa & Oktavianti, 2023) These findings provide valuable insights for university social media managers to optimize their Instagram strategies (Singh et al., 2023).

Selection of population and sample

The study focuses on the top 5 Indonesian universities ranked by their Instagram follower count as of 2024, as listed by the 2024 Instagram University Ranking. These universities serve as the population for the study, with their Instagram accounts being the direct subjects of research. The selection encompassing a range of institutions known for their significant social media presence and varying approaches to digital engagement.

Data collection techniques

Data is collected using Virol, a social media analytics software that provides insights into various metrics such as engagement rates, follower growth, and content interaction. This tool allows for the extraction of detailed data from each university's Instagram account, including: (1) Total number of posts: Catalogs the volume of content shared; (2) Engagement data: includes likes, comments, shares, and saves per post. (3) Posting times: determines when posts are made and correlates this with engagement levels; (4) Hashtag usage: analyzes the frequency and variation of hashtags used. Each data point is extracted for a period covering the past 12 months to ensure current and relevant results.

Analysis Tools and Software

The methodology incorporates several analytical processes, each utilizing specific tools to explore distinct aspects of Instagram engagement: (1) Posting Time Analysis: Conducted using custom scripts in Python that parse data from Virol to identify trends in posting times versus engagement rates; (2) Average Post Analysis: Calculates the average engagement per post to gauge overall content performance; (3) Number of Hashtags per Post Analysis: Utilizes Virol to analyze the impact of hashtag quantity on engagement, identifying optimal hashtag use; (4) Hashtag Variations Analysis: Explores the diversity of hashtags used and their effect on reaching different audience segments; (5) Frequently Posted Content Analysis: identifies the types of content (e.g., images, videos, and stories) that are posted most frequently and examines their engagement levels; (6) Most Engaging Content Analysis: Determines which types of posts (based on content, format, time, etc.) receive the highest levels of engagement;

(7) Post Performance Analysis: Evaluates individual posts to identify features of high-performing content, such as visual elements, captions, and calls to action.

Qualitative analysis

In addition to quantitative data, qualitative analysis is performed to understand the contextual and thematic elements of the content. This includes content categorization, and visual content analysis, which are crucial for understanding how different content types resonate with the audience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data for this study was meticulously gathered from January to December 2023, reflecting the most current interactions within these institutions' Instagram pages. Recent studies have examined how universities use social media, particularly Instagram, for engagement and promotion. Research shows that content type, posting frequency, and timing significantly impact user engagement (Eger & Gangur, 2024; Marwa et al., 2023). Quantitative analyses of followers, likes, and comments, combined with qualitative assessments of content, reveal effective strategies (Quijada et al., 2022). Factors such as post features, competition, and influencer strategies affect follower engagement (Tafesse & Wood, 2023; Farrel et al., 2022). Content strategies emphasizing showcasing resources, humanizing content, and crowdsourcing generate varying levels of engagement. The research method employed involves a quantitative analysis of the total number of followers and posts, supplemented by a qualitative assessment of content types, such as video posts, stories, and regular photo updates. This dual approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of both the scale and nature of engagement. Each university's content strategy is evaluated for its ability to attract and maintain follower interest, from the use of hashtags and captions to the integration of interactive features like polls and Q&A sessions in Instagram stories

Activity analysis

The provided data gives a detailed overview of the posting schedules and frequency for five Instagram accounts: UGM, UI, UB, ITB, and UNPAD, likely utilized for public relations and admissions within higher education. Analysing this information is vital for discerning how each account varies in its social media tactics and what these variations mean for engaging audiences and the efficacy of their outreach.

Posting time

The strategic timing of social media posts is crucial for maximizing user engagement, particularly for educational institutions seeking to connect with their audience (Figure 1). This analysis delves into the posting habits and resulting engagement levels of Indonesia's top five universities on Instagram, focusing on the frequency of posts and the average engagement per post throughout different times of the day.
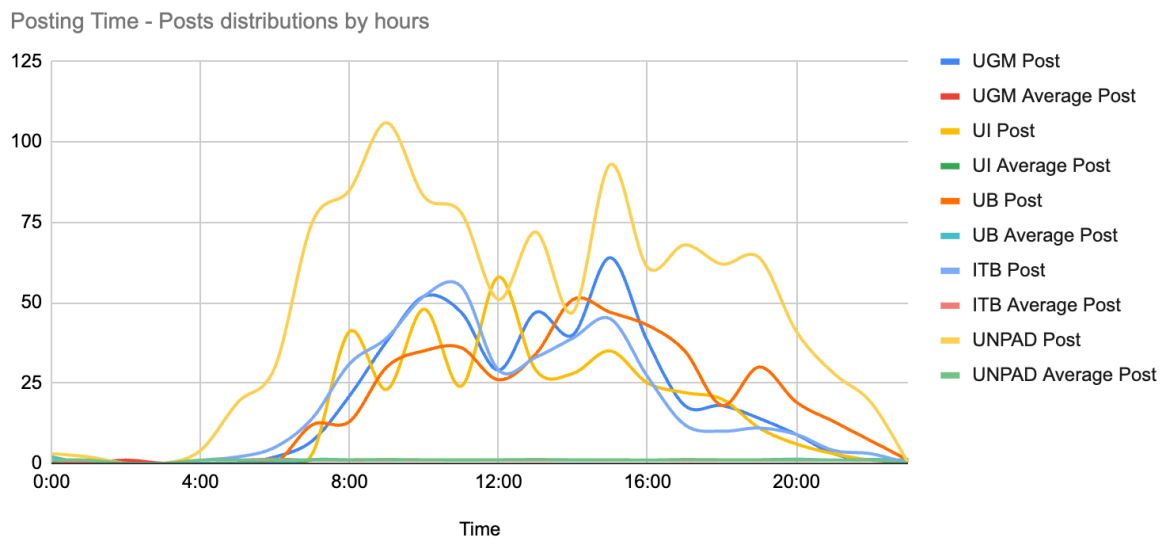

Figure 1 Posting Time - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

The analysis of posting times across universities indicates strategic preferences for certain hours, likely aligned with peak audience online presence (Table 2).

Table 2 Posting Time - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Posting Time										
University	UGM		UI		UB		ITB		UNPAD	
Time	Post	Average Post	Post	Average Post	Post	Average Post	Post	Average Post	Post	Average Post
0:00	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	3	1
1:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
2:00	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	1
5:00	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	19	1
6:00	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	1.3	30	1
7:00	7	1	3	1	12	1.2	14	1	75	1.1

8:00	21	1	41	1.1	13	1.1	31	1.1	85	1.1
9:00	38	1	23	1.2	30	1	39	1.1	106	1.2
10:00	52	1	48	1	35	1	52	1	83	1.1
11:00	47	1	24	1	36	1.1	55	1.1	78	1.1
12:00	29	1	58	1	26	1	29	1	51	1.1
13:00	47	1	29	1	34	1	33	1	72	1.2
14:00	40	1	28	1	51	1	39	1.1	47	1.1
15:00	64	1	35	1.1	47	1	45	1	93	1.1
16:00	38	1	25	1	43	1	27	1	61	1
17:00	18	1	22	1	35	1	12	1	68	1.2
18:00	18	1	20	1	18	1	10	1	62	1.1
19:00	14	1	11	1	30	1.1	11	1	64	1.1
20:00	9	1	6	1	19	1.3	9	1	41	1.1
21:00	3	1	3	1	13	1	4	1	28	1
22:00	1	1	1	1	7	1.2	3	1	19	1.1
23:00	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

UGM shows a surge in posting activity between 10:00 and 15:00, with the highest number of posts occurring at 15:00 (64 posts). This pattern suggests targeting midday to early afternoon for maximum engagement. UI posts most frequently at 08:00 (41 posts) and maintains high activity until 11:00, tapering off in the afternoon. This early morning spike could be designed to catch the audience at the start of their day. UB demonstrates a gradual increase in posting from the early morning, peaking at 09:00 (30 posts) and maintaining relatively steady activity throughout the day, with another smaller peak at 20:00 (19 posts). This indicates a strategy to engage users during both morning and late evening. ITB focuses heavily on the late morning to early afternoon, with a posting peak at 10:00 (52 posts). Like UGM, ITB appears to target the midday hours for engaging its audience. UNPAD exhibits high posting frequencies from early to mid-morning, peaking dramatically at 09:00 (106 posts) and maintaining strong activity until 15:00. The morning focus suggests an intent to engage users as they start their day. This data underscores the importance of timing in social media strategies, with universities targeting specific times of day that likely correspond to their audience's peak online activity. This strategic timing is essential for maximizing post visibility and engagement.

Average post

The analysis of average post engagement across different days of the week for Indonesia's top universities offers valuable insights into the strategic implementation of their Instagram activities (Figure 2).
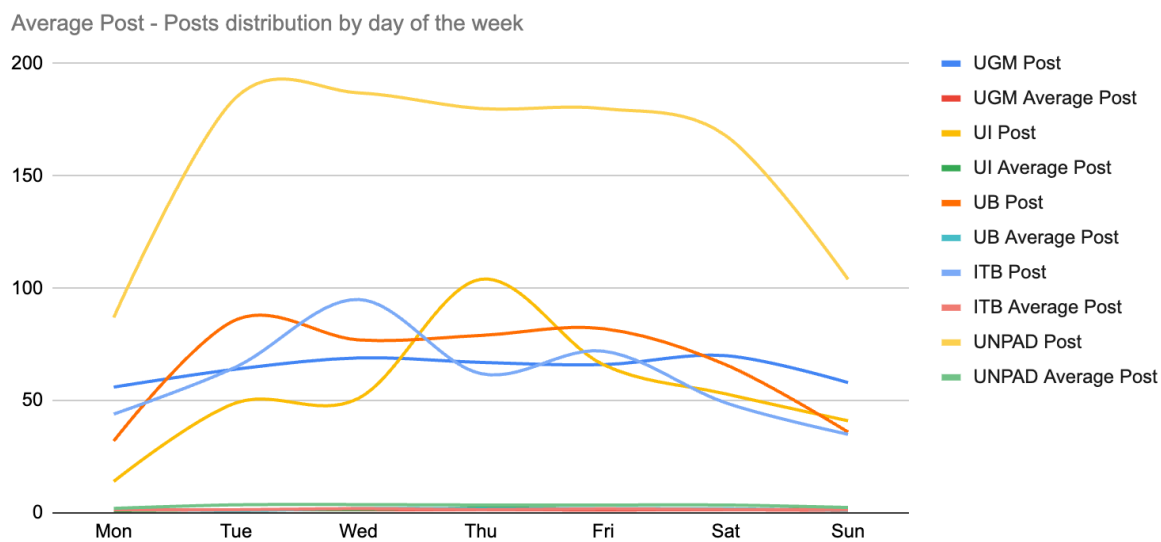

Figure 2 Average Post - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

The data on average posts per day across various universities reveals insights into content posting frequencies and audience engagement patterns (Table 3).

Table 3 Average Post - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Average Post										
University	**UGM**		**UI**		**UB**		**ITB**		**UNPAD**	
Day	**Post**	**Average Post**	**Post**	**Average Post**	**Post**	**Average Post**	**Post**	**Average Post**	**Post**	**Average Post**
Mon	56	1.1	14	1	32	2	44	1.4	87	2
Tue	64	1.3	49	1.4	86	1	65	1.4	185	3.6
Wed	69	1.4	51	1.5	77	2	95	1.9	187	3.7
Thu	67	1.4	104	2.1	79	1.8	62	1.4	180	3.5
Fri	66	1.3	66	1.8	82	1.9	72	1.8	180	3.5
Sat	70	1.4	53	1.6	66	1.8	49	1.5	168	3.5
Sun	58	1.1	41	1.5	36	1.2	35	1.5	104	2.4

UGM consistently posts across the week, with a slight increase on Saturdays (70 posts). The average number of posts remains steady, ranging from 1.1 to 1.4, indicating a stable content strategy throughout the week. UI experiences a peak in posting on Thursdays (104

posts) with an average post rate of 2.1, suggesting strategic targeting for high engagement mid-week. Other days show moderate to low activity, maintaining an average post rate between 1 and 1.8. UB shows fluctuations in posting frequency, with a high on Tuesdays (86 posts) and lower activity on Sundays (36 posts). The average posts range from 1 to 2, highlighting varied engagement strategies based on the day of the week. ITB posts most frequently on Wednesdays (95 posts) and Tuesdays (65 posts), with the average post number peaking on Wednesday at 1.9. This suggests a focus on mid-week activity to capture maximum audience interaction. UNPAD significantly increases post frequency towards the end of the week, particularly noticeable on Tuesday through Friday, with post numbers exceeding 180 and average posts peaking at 3.7 on Wednesday. This could be part of a strategic approach to leverage higher online activity and engagement during these days. This analysis shows that universities tailor their content posting strategies to optimize engagement, with varying focus on different days of the week. Higher posting frequencies and averages during specific days likely align with anticipated peak audience activities, aiming to maximize visibility and interaction.

Hashtags analysis

The data provided delivers an in-depth look at the posting schedules and frequencies for five Instagram accounts—UGM, UI, UB, ITB, and UNPAD—likely employed for public relations and admissions in higher education. This analysis is essential for identifying the differences in social media tactics among these accounts and understanding the impact of these differences on audience engagement and the success of their outreach efforts.

Number of hashtags per post

The strategic use of hashtags on Instagram significantly influences the visibility and engagement of posts (Figure 3). Analysing the data concerning the number of hashtags per post used by Indonesia's top universities provides insights into their digital marketing strategies on this platform.
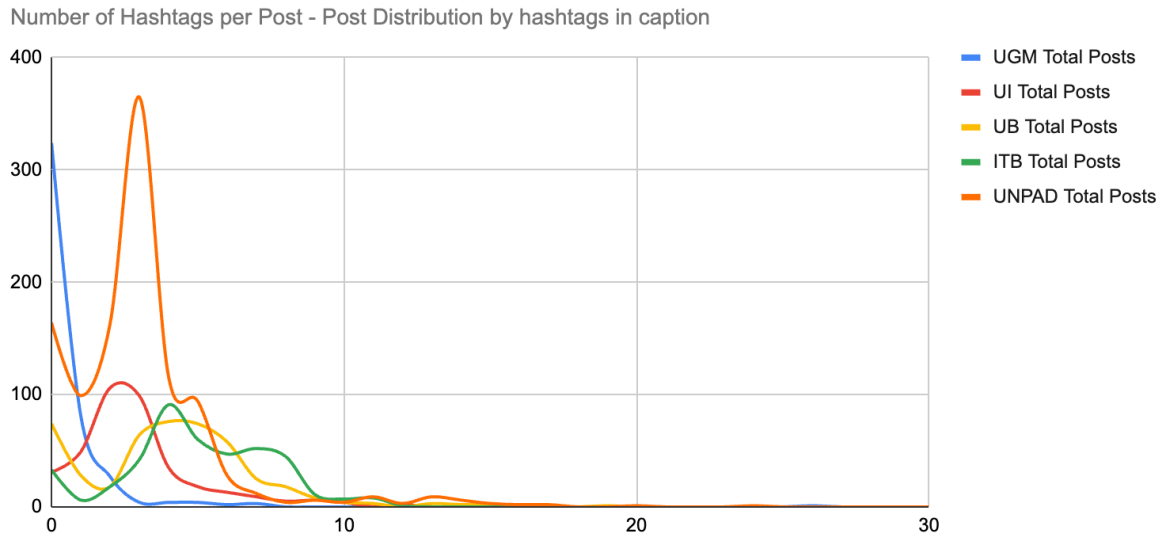
Figure 3. Number of Hashtags Per Post - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

The universities included in this analysis are UGM, UI, UB, ITB, and UNPAD. The analysis of the number of hashtags per post across various universities highlights diverse strategies in social media usage (Table 4).

Table 4 Number of Hashtags Per Post - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Number of Hashtags per Post					
University	**UGM**	**UI**	**UB**	**ITB**	**UNPAD**
Hastags/Post	**Total Post**	**Total Post**	**Total Post**	**Total Post**	**Total Post**
0	324	31	74	33	164
1	81	49	28	6	99
2	27	106	18	18	163
3	4	99	64	42	365
4	4	35	76	91	116
5	4	18	74	60	94
6	2	13	58	47	28
7	3	9	25	52	12
8	0	5	18	45	4
9	0	6	8	11	6
10	0	4	4	7	4
11	0	0	3	8	9
12	0	2	0	1	3

13	0	0	3	0	9
14	0	0	2	0	6
15	0	0	2	0	3
16	0	0	0	0	2
17	0	0	0	0	2
18	0	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	1	0	0
20	0	1	0	0	1
21	0	0	0	0	0
22	0	0	0	0	0
23	0	0	0	0	0
24	0	0	0	1	1
25	0	0	0	0	0
26	1	0	0	0	0
27	0	0	0	0	0
28	0	0	0	0	0
29	0	0	0	0	0
30	0	0	0	0	0

UGM primarily opts for zero hashtags in their posts, with a total of 324 posts devoid of hashtags, suggesting a focus on content rather than discoverability through hashtag use. UI shows a varied approach, with a significant number of posts using 2 to 3 hashtags (106 and 99 posts, respectively), indicating a moderate use of hashtags to potentially balance content visibility and focus. UB also varies in hashtag use, with a peak at posts utilizing 5 hashtags (74 posts), which might aim to enhance engagement and reach without overwhelming the posts. ITB demonstrates a preference for 3 hashtags in 42 posts, likely targeting optimal engagement through a focused hashtag strategy. UNPAD extensively uses hashtags, particularly 2 hashtags in 163 posts and 3 in 365 posts, suggesting a strategic effort to maximize discoverability and engagement. This data implies varying strategies across universities in the use of hashtags, with some opting for minimal to moderate usage and others employing more extensive hashtag strategies to enhance post engagement and reach. The use of hashtags, particularly in moderate numbers, likely aims to strike a balance between over-saturating posts and ensuring sufficient visibility within social media platforms.

Hashtags variation

The strategic use of hashtags in social media campaigns, particularly on platforms like Instagram, plays a pivotal role in enhancing visibility and engagement (Figure 4). An analysis of the hashtag variation used by Indonesia's top universities reveals a significant insight into their engagement strategies on Instagram.
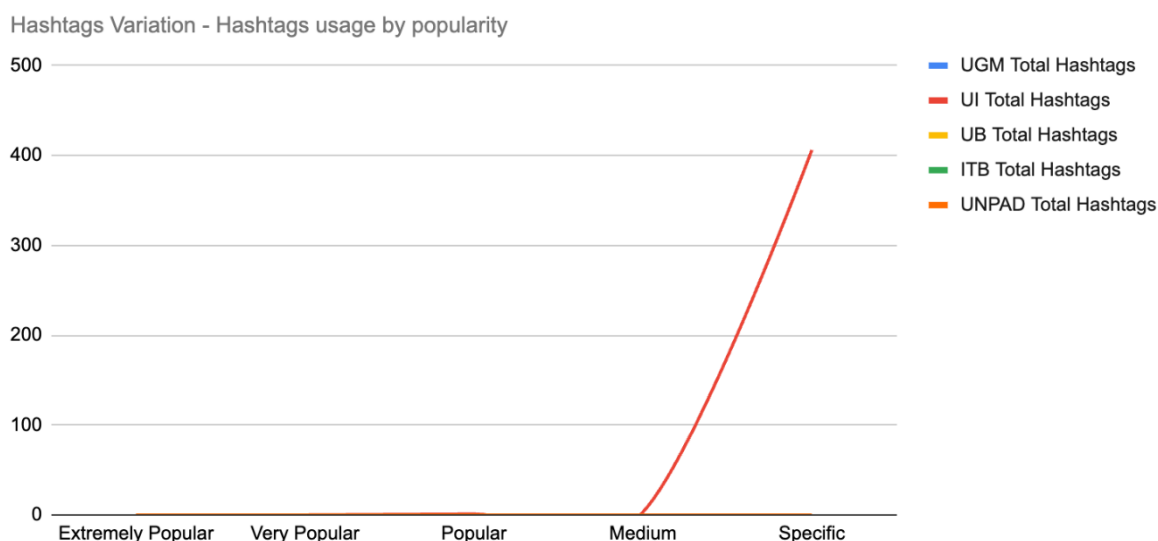

Figure 4 Hashtags variation - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

The data provides a breakdown of hashtag use across categories ranging from 'Extremely Popular' to 'Specific', illustrating a focused approach toward highly targeted hashtag application (Table 5).

Table 5 Hashtags variation - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Hashtags Variation					
University	**UGM**	**UI**	**UB**	**ITB**	**UNPAD**
Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags
Extremely Popular	0	0	0	0	0
Very Popular	0	0	0	0	0
Popular	0	1	0	0	0
Medium	0	3	0	0	0
Specific	0	406	0	0	0

The hashtag variation across universities illustrates distinct preferences and strategic use in content categorization. UGM, UB, ITB, and UNPAD demonstrate no usage of hashtags across any popularity categories, indicating either a strategic decision to avoid hashtag usage

or data limitations in capturing their use. UI exhibits a unique approach, focusing exclusively on highly specific hashtags, with a total of 406 used. This strategy enhances targeting for niche audiences and may contribute to higher engagement in specific communities or topics. This analysis suggests that while most universities are not utilizing hashtags across different levels of popularity, UI leverages specific hashtags to cater to particular interests or content themes. This method can significantly impact content visibility and engagement by reaching the right audience segments.

Content analysis

The data provided gives a detailed examination of the posting times and frequency for five Instagram accounts: GM, UI, UB, ITB, and UNPAD, likely utilized for public relations and admissions in higher education. This analysis is key to discerning how these accounts vary in their social media approaches and assessing the effects of these differences on audience engagement and the efficacy of their outreach.

Frequently Posted Content

The strategic deployment of content on Instagram by Indonesia's top universities provides a window into their digital engagement tactics (Figure 5). Analysing the frequency and types of content posted—ranging from images and videos to albums, IGTV, and Reels—reveals how these institutions tailor their social media activities to connect with their audiences, fostering community engagement and enhancing their visibility online.
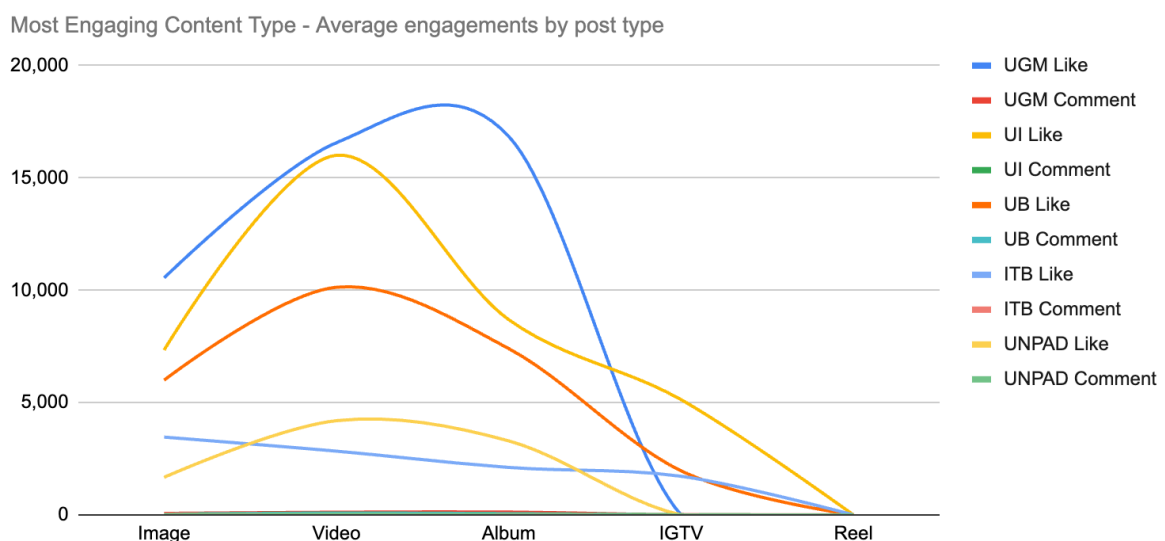

Figure 5 Frequently Posted Content - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

The analysis of frequently posted content based on hashtag usage across universities showcases varied strategies in content deployment (Table 6). UGM exhibits a balanced approach in hashtag usage across images and videos, each featuring 132 and 159 hashtags respectively, suggesting an evenly distributed content strategy.

Table 6 Frequently Posted Content - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Frequently Posted Content					
University	UGM	UI	UB	ITB	UNPAD
Post Types	Total Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags	Total Hastags
Image	132	210	111	114	519
Video	159	67	72	28	120
Album	159	99	274	279	452
IGTV	0	2	1	1	0
Reel	0	0	0	0	0

UI utilizes hashtags more intensively with images, notching up 210 hashtags, while videos and albums are comparatively lower at 67 and 99 respectively. This indicates a stronger focus on static content for engagement through hashtags. UB stands out with albums receiving the highest number of hashtags at 274, significantly more than images and videos. This suggests that UB prioritizes albums for thematic or grouped content presentations. ITB also shows a preference for albums in terms of hashtag usage, with 279 hashtags, highlighting a trend towards multi-image posts in engaging their audience. UNPAD shows a unique pattern with images significantly leading in hashtag usage at 519. Videos also receive considerable attention with 120 hashtags, indicating a robust strategy for these types of content. This data suggests that while all universities leverage hashtags to enhance post visibility and engagement, there is a notable preference for albums and images, particularly in institutions like UB and UNPAD. The strategic use of hashtags in these content types of points to their potential effectiveness in reaching larger audiences and boosting engagement metrics.

Most engaging content types

When examining the engagement strategies of Indonesia's top universities on Instagram, analysing the types of content that garner the most interaction provides crucial insights (Figure 6). Each university showcases unique patterns in their engagement metrics across various content types, including images, videos, albums, IGTV, and Reels. These

metrics reflect how well each content type resonates with their audiences, shaping future strategies for digital engagement.
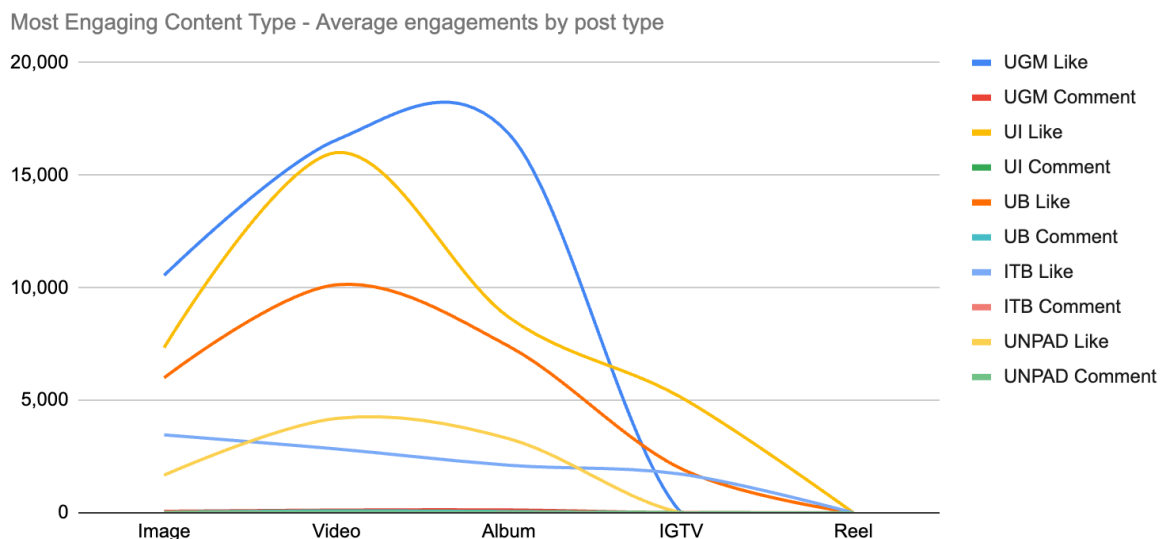

Figure 6 Most Engaging Content Type - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Analysing the most engaging content types across various universities reveals distinct preferences and effective strategies (Table 7). UGM videos dominate engagement, achieving 16,569 likes and 119 comments per post on average. This preference highlights the effectiveness of dynamic visual content in capturing audience attention. UI videos again lead with strong engagement, garnering 16,011 likes and 85 comments per post. The consistency across UGM and UI suggests a broader trend favouring video content within university communities.

Table 7 Most Engaging Content Type - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

	Most Engaging Content Type									
University	UGM		UI		UB		ITB		UNPAD	
	Average/Post		Average/Post		Average/Post		Average/Post		Average/Post	
Post Type	Like	Comment	Like	Comment	Like	Comment	Like	Comment	Like	Comment
Image	10,551	66	7,341	42	5,999	42	3,463	41	1,673	16
Video	16,569	119	16,011	85	10,135	77	2,837	21	4,194	32
Album	16,850	127	8,690	60	7,402	54	2,112	25	3,294	17
IGTV	0	0	5,130	19	1,960	5	1,719	11	0	0
Reel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

UB albums prove most engaging, averaging 7,402 likes and 54 comments per post. This indicates that collections of images or themed content series resonate well with their audience. ITB IGTV posts, although less common, draw significant attention with 1,960 likes and 11 comments per post. This may reflect a niche audience preference for longer-form video content at ITB. UNPAD videos are most effective, with an average of 4,194 likes and 32 comments per post. This reinforces the general trend that video content tends to engage university audiences effectively. Overall, video content emerges as the most engaging across most universities, suggesting a strategic focus on video production could enhance audience interaction and engagement rates. Albums also show potential, particularly at UB, indicating that multi-image posts can effectively engage audiences when well-curated.

Post-Performance

Exploring the engagement strategies of Indonesia's top universities on Instagram uncovers which content types resonate most effectively with their audiences (Figure 7).
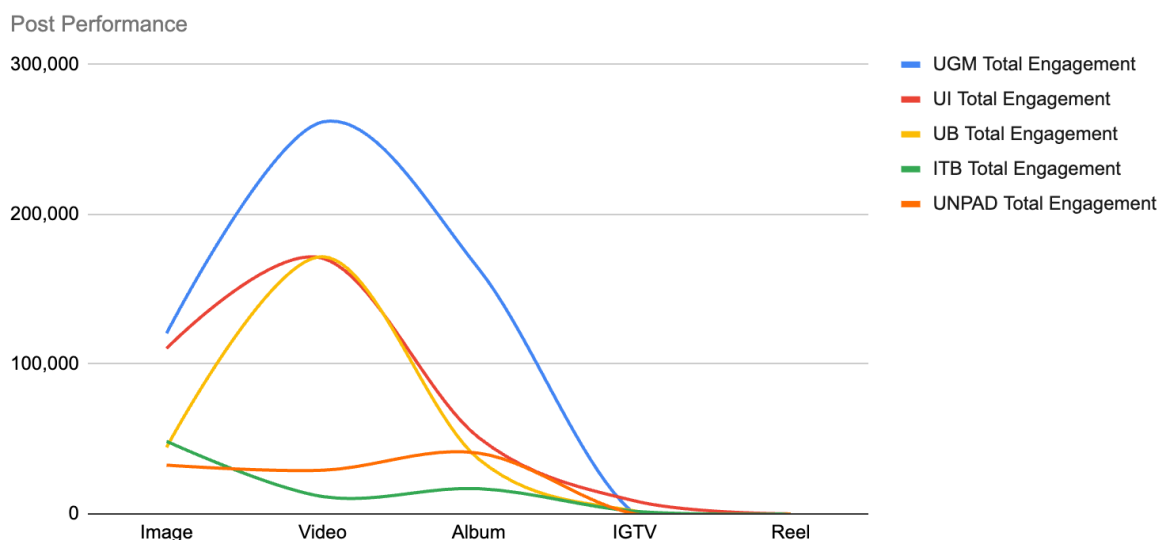

Figure 7 Post-Performance - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

An analysis of average likes and comments per post type—images, videos, albums, IGTV, and Reels—reveals nuanced insights into audience preferences and engagement behaviours (Table 8).

Table 8 Post-Performance - Top 5 Indonesian Universities on Instagram 2024

Post Performance					
University	UGM	UI	UB	ITB	UNPAD
Post Types	Total Engagement	Total Engagement	Total Engagement	Total Engagement	Total Engagement
Image	120,555	110,517	44,448	48,478	32,550
Video	261,786	170,745	171,765	11,569	29,143
Album	163,702	50,960	36,588	16,857	40,568
IGTV	0	8,672	1,965	1,730	0
Reel	0	0	0	0	0

The post-performance across different universities reveals varying patterns of audience engagement. UGM sees the highest engagement with videos, totalling 261,786 interactions. This significantly surpasses engagement on images and albums, indicating a strong preference for video content among UGM's audience. UI also finds videos as the most engaging content type with 170,745 total interactions. However, images also perform well here, with a total engagement of 110,517, suggesting a balanced content strategy could be effective. UB shows a slightly different trend where videos lead with 171,765 interactions but albums also gather a substantial total of 36,588. This suggests that both dynamic and static visual content forms are effective in engaging the UB audience. ITB has its highest engagement numbers for videos at 11,569. Interestingly, albums also attract attention with 16,857 interactions, which might indicate a preference for a variety of visual content forms. UNPAD displays a preference for albums, which top the chart with 40,568 interactions. Videos, although less engaging than at other universities, still accumulate 29,143 interactions. Overall, video content consistently registers the highest engagement across most universities, underscoring its effectiveness in capturing and retaining audience attention. However, albums also prove to be significant, especially where videos have lower engagement, indicating that varying content types can cater to different audience preferences.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of engagement strategies across Indonesia's top 10 universities on Instagram reveals several key findings: (1) Video Dominance: Videos consistently emerge as the most engaging content type across the majority of universities, indicating a strong audience preference for dynamic, visual storytelling; (2) Strategic Posting Times: Universities exhibit

specific peak times for posting, generally aligning with early mornings and midday, to maximize visibility and interaction; (3) Diverse Hashtag Use: While some universities employ a broad range of hashtags, others focus on highly specific tags to target niche audiences, enhancing content discoverability and relevance; (4) Content Variety: A mix of images, videos, and albums proves effective, with albums performing particularly well at certain universities, suggesting the importance of varied content strategies to maintain audience interest and engagement; (5) Day of Week Variability: Posting frequency and engagement rates also vary by day, with higher activity typically noted mid-week, pointing to strategic planning in content scheduling to capture the highest possible audience engagement; (6) These insights underline the necessity for universities to adapt and refine their Instagram strategies based on audience behaviour and content performance analytics. Tailoring content types, posting schedules, and hashtag usage according to analysed trends and engagement patterns can significantly enhance audience interaction and the overall effectiveness of social media.

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