



Enhancing Student Awareness: Communication Strategies to Support Gender Equality at UNS

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Abstract. Women's participation in higher education is an important manifestation of efforts to achieve gender equality, in line with SDG Goal 5. Therefore, it is important to intensify the promotion of SDG Goal 5 in the academic environment, including at Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS). Currently, UNS has organised various programmes that support the implementation of Goal 5, but the promotion of these initiatives has yet to be optimal. To maximise the implementation of gender equality on campus, awareness raising among students is needed. UNS also has various information platforms that can potentially be used to disseminate SDGs programs, but their use for promotion, especially on Goal 5, still needs to be improved. This article aims to develop an effective communication strategy in informing the implementation of SDG Goal 5 at UNS. The methodology used is a desk study, using a reference framework from the book *Communication Strategy for the Implementation of Achieving Sustainable Development Goals* published by Bappenas combined with various recommendations from previous literature studies. The results of this study produce a number of strategic steps that can increase student awareness of Goal 5 implementation, one of which is a social media campaign. With this communication strategy recommendation, it is hoped that it can be a reference for agencies in an effort to promote and increase student awareness of the implementation of SDG 5 at UNS.

Keywords: Communication strategy, SDG 5, Gender equality, Higher education

1 Introduction

By the 2030 deadline approaching, the SDGs continue to drive global action to achieve the sustainability goals. One of the 17 goals in the SDGs is "Gender Equality," or SDG Goal 5, which focuses on closing the gender gap globally by ensuring equality for women and girls in all aspects of life. Its main goals include the elimination of gender-based violence, support for equal leadership, and increased access to reproductive health. The achievement of gender equality is seen as an important prerequisite for advancing sustainable social and economic development, strengthening inclusive societies, and supporting the achievement of other SDGs targets, thereby accelerating global progress.

Higher education institutions play an important role in achieving sustainable development, particularly when it comes to gender equality. As a key actor, these

institutions not only provide professional education and training, but also have the responsibility to raise public awareness of the importance of their role in sustainability development and empower future generations of professionals with the skills needed to meet the challenges of education, research, and community service sustainability, higher education institutions can be a driving force in promoting equality gender by supporting women's active participation in various academic and professional fields [1].

In the national context, efforts to increase gender equality in Indonesia have shown significant results. In 2023, Indonesia's Gender Inequality Index (IKG) decreased by 0.012 points to 0.447, continuing its consistent improvement since 2019. This decline is seen in all three dimensions of its constituents: reproductive health, empowerment, and labor force participation. A significant increase occurred in the participation of women in the labor force, which increased from 53.41 percent in 2022 to 54.52 percent in 2023, indicating that gender equality in Indonesia continues to progress [2].

The increase in women's participation is also reflected in higher education. Data from the Higher Education Database (PDDIKTI) shows that in 2024 the number of female students will reach 5,537,218 people, higher than male students who number 4,568,784 people [3]. This positive trend indicates progress in providing equal educational opportunities for women, which is an important step in efforts to achieve SDG Goal 5. Gender equality in higher education not only aims to provide equal access to education for all girls and boys, but also further contributes to the achievement of other SDGs, including inclusive economic growth [4].

Thus, women's increasing participation in higher education can be seen as a form of concrete implementation of SDG Goal 5. The increasing number of women in higher education institutions has the potential to reduce the gender gap in various professional fields and strengthen women's leadership in the future. Women's participation in higher education not only helps to achieve gender equality, but also contributes to the achievement of the overall sustainable development goals.

As one of the higher education institutions in Indonesia, Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) also implements the SDGs in campus life. Through the UNS SDGs Report 2022 [5], UNS is committed to taking a role in Goal 5: Gender Equality. As an effort to implement SDG Goal 5, in 2022 UNS will implement several programs to support women's empowerment and gender equality. For example, as an effort to prevent discrimination against women, the Local Wisdom Research Group at the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) held a webinar with the theme "The Career of Women Leaders in the Perspective of Gender Equality." This webinar is a means to disseminate the results of research on gender equality in the local context, especially through qualitative research. This theme provides an interesting discussion space about the importance of gender equality in leadership. Another example is in the form of support for gender equality through the collaboration between Girl Up UNS and the Y20 community in the event "Creating an Equal and Inclusive Environment through Education and Digitalization." This event raises youth awareness of the importance of an equitable and inclusive environment and provides an opportunity for the younger generation from G20 countries to voice their views on social change in multicultural societies. As such, UNS plays an active role in promoting gender equality through education and youth participation as part of its commitment to SDG Goal 5.

The two examples of programs above are just a few of the efforts UNS has made to support the implementation of SDG Goal 5. As an institution committed to sustainable development, UNS has established the SDGs Center to design and implement various programs to promote and realize gender equality. However, promotions related to these programs are still not running optimally. This can have an impact on the low level of awareness of the campus community and the public towards the efforts that have been made.

Therefore, it is important to increase the effectiveness of this promotion because wider awareness will strengthen the support and participation of all elements of the campus, especially students as the future generation. With a high level of awareness, it is hoped that more and more individuals will be actively involved in gender equality programs, so that the implementation of SDG Goal 5 can be achieved more quickly and equitably. Therefore, UNS needs a planned and effective communication strategy to ensure that information about SDGs initiatives can be widely disseminated and easily accessed. Optimal information dissemination will not only increase awareness, but also have the potential to be directly proportional to the achievement of gender equality goals within UNS.

2 Literature Review

Higher education institutions play an important role in raising students' awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to support global sustainability and prepare them as agents of change. The study "Raising Awareness of Sustainable Development Goals in Higher Education Institutions" [6] conducted at Abdullah Gül University (AGU), Turkey, shows that the implementation of a curriculum specifically designed to instill sustainability values is very effective in shaping the younger generation oriented towards sustainability practices. Through the integration of the SDGs into the curriculum, campus activities, and external collaborations, students can better understand the social and environmental impact of their actions, which in turn supports the achievement of various SDGs goals among the next generation.

In addition to the formal curriculum, efforts to increase awareness of the SDGs can also be carried out through effective communication strategies, including social media. In the study "Role of Social Media in Creation of Awareness for Sustainable Development Goal in Higher Education" [7] in Kolkata, India, it was found that although many students are not familiar with the term SDGs formally, they are actively involved in social media activities that support the goals of the SDGs, such as environmental conservation and poverty alleviation campaigns. Social media is an important platform to encourage collective action, disseminate information, and strengthen awareness of the importance of sustainability, although this research is limited to geographical scope and limited literature review on the promotion of the SDGs among higher education students.

Gender equality, as part of SDG Goal 5, is also an important focus in sustainable development. As discussed in the article "Higher Education and Development in Indonesia: A Gender Perspective" [8]. The research discussed in the journal article was

carried out using a case study method in higher education in North Sumatra to look at gender aspects related to women's access and participation in higher education in Indonesia. The findings show that despite the increase in women's participation in higher education, women still face various structural barriers to achieving leadership positions and representation in science and technology. In addition, despite the increase in the number of female students, gender disparities at the employment and income levels remain visible.

There are no studies that specifically discuss how effective and applicable communication strategies can be applied to promote SDG Goal 5 in educational institutions in Indonesia. However, Bappenas as a leading sector in the implementation of the SDGs in Indonesia has published a Guidebook on SDGs Communication Strategies [9]. This guide, with the AISAS (Awareness, Interest, Searching, Action, Sharing) approach, provides a solid foundation for various SDGs communication and advocacy activities in Indonesia, both at the national and regional levels, including SDGs communication programs from various stakeholders, including higher education institutions. The trend of gender equality in higher education has indeed shown a fairly good improvement, but continuous promotion through effective communication strategies is still needed to optimize gender equality in the sector and support the achievement of SDG Goal 5 in Indonesia.

Therefore, although there has been no previous study that specifically discusses good practices in promoting SDG Goal 5 in the higher education environment, the SDGs Communication Strategy Guidebook from Bappenas can be used as an initial reference in developing a communication strategy on this issue. By utilizing this guide, researchers will formulate a communication strategy model that supports SDG Goal 5 related to gender equality, which can later be implemented within the scope of UNS which already has an SDGs Center but in practice the dissemination of information has not been carried out optimally.

3 Methods

The methodology in this study uses desk study by collecting various materials from previous studies, guidebooks, and through digital materials available on the internet. Desk research namely the empirical method of literature review and theoretical methods for processing previously collected empirical material such as: analysis, synthesis, and comparison [10].

This research was conducted using the desk study method, which is an approach that involves the collection, analysis, and synthesis of information from a variety of secondary sources. This method was selected because it permits the use of readily available data and literature to develop a relevant and contextual communication strategy for Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS). The research data was obtained from a variety of sources, including the UNS SDG Report 2022, academic publications, and the SDGs communication strategy guidebook published by the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas). Additionally, this research employed other sources, such as journal articles, data from the Ministry of Education, and international publications that focus on the implementation of SDGs in higher education institutions.

The research process commenced with the collection of secondary data pertinent to the subject matter under investigation. The data was then subjected to thematic analysis in order to identify the key elements of an effective communication strategy. This analysis process is directed at understanding the factors that influence the success or challenges in the promotion of SDG Goal 5 in the higher education environment. The AISAS (Awareness, Interest, Searching, Action, Sharing) approach was used as a conceptual framework in evaluating and designing the communication strategy. Additionally, the analysis identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOT) faced by UNS in local and operational contexts.

Moreover, the findings of the analysis are synthesized to generate recommendations for communication strategies that can be implemented. The synthesis process entailed a consideration of the institutional context of UNS, including student characteristics and the availability of existing communication platforms. To ensure accuracy and relevance, the findings were validated by comparing the results of the analysis with those of previous studies on SDGs communication strategies at the national and international levels. This research is designed to provide an integrated view of effective communication strategies; however, it is limited by the absence of primary data collection, such as student interviews or surveys, which could provide additional insights.

The desk study method employed in this research permits a thorough examination of the extant literature, thereby facilitating the formulation of comprehensive recommendations. However, the absence of primary data represents a significant limitation of this research, necessitating the further testing of the recommendations through direct implementation and evaluation in the UNS campus environment.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Institutional Background

UNS uses various platforms to report and promote the SDGs. On the UNS website, you can find the UNS SDG Report which contains various topics such as activities that support the SDGs, cooperation programs, and campus initiatives to achieve the SDGs targets. Here, UNS also underlines the role of higher education institutions in achieving sustainable development goals, including gender equality (SDG Goal 5). In addition to containing reports, the UNS website also publishes news about activities related to the SDGs.

In addition, to report about the SDGs, UNS has a special social media called SDGs Center UNS which can be found on Instagram and LinkedIn platforms. The Instagram account functions as an interactive information channel to disseminate information about programs run by UNS related to each SDGs. Meanwhile, there is no content on the LinkedIn account.

UNS's initiative reflects an integrated communication approach that reaches a wider audience, by combining a website for formal reporting and social media for more casual but effective engagement. However, the frequency of uploading content related to the SDGs is still relatively rare and inconsistent. For example, on the UNS website, at least 8 (eight) news reports related to gender equality issues can be found. Meanwhile, the upload on the UNS SDGs Center Instagram account seems to have been quite long

without any regular content updates. This existing platform needs to be managed more optimally so that the impact is more significant, especially in increasing student and public awareness of SDG Goal 5 in the campus environment. Consistent posting frequency and more varied content—for example, regular updates on SDGs activities, inspirational stories, and event reporting—will help UNS reach a wider audience and ensure that messages remain relevant and remembered by the campus community and the general public

Communication Strategy

To develop an effective communication strategy for the promotion of SDG Goal 5 on gender equality at Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS), you can follow the guidelines contained in the SDGs Communication Strategy Guidebook published by Bappenas. The first step is to understand the AISAS (Awareness, Interest, Searching, Action, Sharing) approach used in this guide as the basis for preparing SDGs communication as attached to Table 1. This approach helps design the steps of communication in order: building awareness, creating interest, facilitating the search for information, encouraging action, and encouraging the sharing of knowledge or experience

The Communication Strategy for SDG 5 can be developed by referring to the main message contained in the Guidebook, namely the achievement of gender equality and justice in various fields through the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

At the **Awareness stage**, the focus of communication is to introduce the importance of gender equality as a crucial issue in the higher education sector, as well as its relevance in creating an inclusive and safe campus environment. In this stage, UNS can utilize offline channels such as seminars or group discussions to discuss issues of gender equality and gender-based violence involving students. In addition, online channels such as the official UNS website, as well as the UNS SDGs Center social media and the campus's official social media accounts, can be used to disseminate digital posters and infographics about the importance of gender equality. Collaboration with related faculty social media accounts can also expand the reach of the audience.

Furthermore, at the **Interest stage**, the main message that needs to be conveyed is the real benefits of gender equality and its impact on the campus community. At this stage, UNS can display inspirational stories from alumni or important figures who have benefited from gender equality policies, either through offline channels such as photo exhibitions or story-sharing sessions, as well as through online channels. UNS social media and the UNS SDGs Center can be used to share storytelling-based content, short videos, and testimonials from students or alumni who feel the positive impact of gender equality programs.

The next stage, **Searching**, aims to provide more in-depth information about SDG Goal 5 and its implementation at UNS. Offline channels such as physical brochures or booklets on gender equality and SDG Goal 5 can be available in the library or student information center, while online channels such as the UNS website and content on the UNS SDGs Center social media can provide additional resources and relevant links.

At the **Action stage**, the main message aims to invite students to actively participate in gender equality programs on campus. In this stage, UNS can organize workshops or special leadership training for women in the campus environment, in collaboration with student organizations and faculty. Online, UNS can use social media and websites to

promote this program and facilitate registration through an online form that can be accessed through these channels. Invitation campaigns packaged with special hashtags can attract more students to join.

Finally, in the **Sharing stage**, students are encouraged to share their experiences in gender equality activities on campus, in the hope of inspiring more individuals to contribute. UNS can host offline forums or sharing sessions to allow students to share their live experiences, while live sessions on social media, such as Instagram or YouTube, can be an effective way to share these stories with a wider audience. UNS can also encourage social media campaigns with special hashtags that invite students to share their experiences. The movement of using and sharing content with special hashtags shows that social media is an effective platform in conveying information and encouraging collective action [7].

Table 1. Table Communication Strategy Approach

Building AWARENESS	Creating INTEREST	Initiating SEARCHING	Encouraging ACTION	Conducting SHARING
Creating program recognition	Building interest	Providing information resources	Encouraging participant action	Utilizing documentation as an example
Introducing the program's goals and targets	Explaining the benefits	Providing necessary data	Supplying program packages and guidelines	Organizing forums for stakeholders to share
Understanding obstacles and challenges	Explaining participation in the program	Centralized SDG information	Setting up KPIs	Showcasing best practices
Explaining the expected benefits and results	Outlining program incentives	Determining media types as information sources	Conducting documentation, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation	Presenting evaluations and corrections

5 Conclusions

This study highlights the importance of effective communication strategies to increase awareness and participation of Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) students in the implementation of SDG Goal 5, which focuses on gender equality. Based on the results of the analysis, UNS already has several programs and platforms that support SDG Goal 5, but the implementation of an optimal communication strategy is still needed so that this initiative can be better known and accepted by the campus community. The AISAS (Awareness, Interest, Searching, Action, Sharing) approach used as a reference in this study shows the potential to be applied at UNS as an effort to strengthen communication about gender equality.

At the **Awareness stage**, it is important for UNS to introduce programs related to SDG Goal 5 through platforms that are easily accessible to students, such as social media. This approach can involve the use of engaging visuals and educational content to grab attention. In the **Interest stage**, UNS can strengthen the message by displaying inspirational stories from students or alumni who are involved in gender equality efforts, thereby fostering a greater sense of interest among students. For the **Searching stage**, it is necessary to provide more in-depth information about SDG Goal 5 and its relevance to students. Materials such as guides, brochures, or access to online information can be an additional source of knowledge for students.

The **Action stage** is key in encouraging students to be directly involved in activities that support gender equality. UNS can organize activities such as women's leadership workshops or thematic discussions, as well as involve student organizations in gender equality campaigns. Finally, in the **Sharing stage**, students are encouraged to share their experiences, either directly in discussion forums or through social media with certain campaign hashtags. This will help expand the reach of the program while inspiring more individuals to contribute.

However, the study also identifies several challenges that need to be addressed, such as limited resources and support in the management of gender equality programs. Therefore, collaboration between UNS and various internal and external stakeholders is very important to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of this program.

With a targeted and structured communication strategy, it is hoped that UNS can create a more inclusive campus environment and support gender equality. The success of this program will not only have a positive impact on campus life, but also inspire other educational institutions in Indonesia to adopt and develop similar initiatives in support of sustainable development goals, especially SDG Goal 5.

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