



Framing Strategies and User Engagement in Digital Health Advocacy: A Case Study of the #WorldMentalHealthDay Campaign on Instagram Reels

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ABSTRACT

The framing strategies and user engagement within digital health advocacy are examined through a case study of the #WorldMentalHealthDay campaign on Instagram. Adopting a qualitative case study methodology, the research employs content analysis to evaluate five high-engagement Instagram Reels. This is followed by a thematic analysis of systematically sampled user comments to examine how audiences interpret and engage with these digital narratives. Grounded in Framing Theory, the investigation explores the alignment between strategic message construction and user engagement. The findings indicate that content creators significantly utilize moral evaluation and problem definition to normalize mental health struggles and reduce social stigma. Messages frequently emphasize affirming individual self-worth and reframing recovery as a valuable, non-linear process. User responses largely reflect high levels of emotional resonance, characterized by peer support and shared vulnerability. The analysis suggests that for this campaign, the analyzed Reels functioned primarily as a communal, affective space for solidarity rather than as a source for technical health information. Ultimately, the research underscores the critical importance of strategic framing in digital mental health initiatives. It highlights the campaign's potential to foster empathy and catalyze public engagement, while suggesting a need for a more balanced integration of emotional validation and actionable health resources in future digital advocacy.

Keywords: *Digital Campaigns, Social Media Engagement, Mental Health Awareness, Instagram, Framing Theory*

INTRODUCTION

Social media has emerged as a primary infrastructure for public health mobilization and community advocacy, playing a critical role in shaping public discourse around historically marginalized health topics. A cornerstone of this global effort is the #WorldMental Health Day initiative, observed annually on October 10.

Established in 1992 by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) and co-supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), the campaign mobilizes global stakeholders under specific thematic mandates—such as Mental Health in Humanitarian Emergencies (2025), Mental Health is a Universal Human Right (2023), and Make Mental Health & Well-Being for All a Global Priority (2022)—to address systemic gaps in psychiatric care and public education (Lu, 2020). As digital communication has shifted toward short-form video architectures, platforms like Instagram, particularly through its "Reels" feature, have become primary sites for constructing these digital health narratives.

Extant health communication literature demonstrates that social media platforms are highly effective at expanding the reach of health campaigns and fostering peer-to-peer support networks. Recent empirical studies have shown that micro-narratives and visual storytelling on platforms like TikTok and Instagram significantly lower the barrier to health information seeking (Chen & Wang, 2021). Researchers have traditionally applied Framing Theory to examine how public health agencies construct messages to influence public behaviors, noting that specific frames such as diagnostic (identifying the problem) or prognostic (offering solutions) dictate how audiences personalize health risks. Furthermore, structural features like hashtags are acknowledged not merely as sorting mechanisms, but as critical tools for community-building, opinion formation, and the reinforcement of shared group identities.

Despite these insights, a critical gap remains in recent empirical literature regarding short-form video advocacy. While previous studies have extensively analyzed text-heavy platforms like Twitter (X) or Facebook to track public health information dissemination, they have largely focused on quantitative metrics such as retweet volumes, click-through rates, or macro-sentiment scores (Faus et al., 2022). These approaches fail to address how specific visual and textual frames interact within algorithmic, short-form video environments like Instagram Reels. More importantly, existing literature frequently relies on general broad-stroke surveys or isolated structural metrics to measure campaign success, leaving an empirical blind spot regarding how audiences actively interpret these frames in real time through user-generated comments (Wu & Hong, 2022). Prior research has identified that the context of health narratives exists on social media and that video formats such as Reels are highly effective at capturing initial user awareness (Safitri, 2023). However, it has failed to investigate the qualitative alignment or misalignment between the strategic

problem surveys or isolated structural metrics to measure campaign success, leaving an empirical blind spot regarding how audiences actively interpret these frames in real time through user-generated comments (Wu & Hong, 2022). Prior research has identified that the context of health narratives exists on social media and that video formats such as Reels are highly effective at capturing initial user awareness (Safitri, 2023). However, it has failed to investigate the qualitative alignment or misalignment between the strategic problem definitions used by content creators and the actual peer-to-peer interpretations and emotional responses within the comment sections (Wu & Hong, 2022).

This lack of empirical clarity presents a distinct problem for digital health communication. While short-form video formats allow for the rapid democratization and viral spread of mental health discourse, the structural constraints of the medium can lead to oversimplified or sensationalized narratives. There is a growing concern that while campaigns generate high surface-level visibility, they may obscure the structural complexities of mental health care.

Without understanding how specific frames translate into user interpretations, health advocates risk creating "affective echoes" where content generates high emotional resonance and peer solidarity but fails to transfer actionable, technical health literacy or direct users to professional resources. This study contributes to the field of digital media, digital campaign, and health communication in two ways. Theoretically, it extends Framing Theory into the under-researched ecosystem of Instagram Reels, offering a localized framework for how visual media dictates public health sense-making. Methodologically, it moves beyond reductive automated sentiment analysis by pairing visual content analysis with qualitative thematic analysis of user comments, capturing the nuanced dynamics of online solidarity. Practically, the findings offer a blueprint for public health agencies and digital content creators to design future mental health campaigns that balance emotional validation with actionable, evidence-based health resources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualizing Mental Health Advocacy in the Digital Landscape

Mental health advocacy in the contemporary era focuses heavily on shifting public understanding from passive awareness to active stigma reduction and proactive help-seeking behaviors (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). Visual-centric platforms like Instagram and TikTok have decentralized this discourse, allowing peer-led narratives and localized hashtags (#EndTheStigma, #WorldMental Health Day) to challenge institutional stigma (Barry et al., 2021; Naslund et al., 2020). However, a critical divergence exists: while public health scholars argue that digital interactions facilitate rapid peer solidarity, digital media theorists warn that high visibility does not

automatically translate into deep cognitive processing or behavioral change. Mohamed Johar et al. (2024) caution against "clicktivism," where audiences consume condensed, aesthetically pleasing content without internalizing actionable health literacy.

This highlights a scholarly gap regarding how strategic content framing can bridge rapid engagement with deep semantic interpretation.

Integrating *Naqli* and *Aqli* Frameworks in Mental Health Resilience

In Muslim-majority environments, secular campaign frameworks face structural limitations if they ignore theological worldviews. Digital communication scholarship increasingly recognizes that health campaigns are most effective when synthesizing rational, scientific models (*Aqli*) with scriptural, spiritual knowledge (*Naqli*). From an Islamic perspective, psychological well-being is holistic, rejecting the rigid division of mind and body (Farooq Bukhari, 2025). Islamic theology operationalizes cognitive coping through active spiritual constructs, including purposeful patience (*sabr*), reliance on divine decree (*tawakkul*), and meditative mindfulness (*dhikr*) (Farooq Bukhari, 2025; Rasool et al., 2024).

Recent empirical studies demonstrate that these *Naqli* principles functionally align with modern cognitive-behavioral coping mechanisms. *Sabr* facilitates cognitive reframing and distress tolerance, while *tawakkul* lowers existential anxiety by shifting the locus of control away from unpredictable external factors (Farooq Bukhari, 2025; Rasool et al., 2024). Furthermore concepts like *shukr* (*sabr*), reliance on divine decree (*tawakkul*), and meditative mindfulness (*dhikr*) (Farooq Bukhari, 2025; Rasool et al., 2024).

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Social Media, Digital Campaigns, and Mental Health

Social media refers to interactive computer-mediated technologies that support real-time or asynchronous communication, content sharing, and networking (Wong et al., 2020). Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and X support rapid dissemination

of health information, particularly among youth; studies report that nearly 70% of youth rely on these platforms for mental health information (Alonzo & Popescu, 2021; Saha et al., 2019). Among these, Instagram serves as a key visual tool for peer support and expert engagement (Capozzo, 2023; Naslund et al., 2020), though risks of misinformation and mental disorder trivialization persist (Peng et al., 2022).

A digital campaign employs online tools to promote specific messaging, challenging misconceptions through relatable narratives (De Vere Hunt & Linos, 2022; Ferrari et al., 2021; Teo et al., 2024). Hashtags like #WorldMental Health Day unify audiences to increase campaign visibility (Ta'amneh & Al-Ghazo, 2021). When applied ethically, digital campaigns align with Islamic principles such as da'wah (inviting to goodness) and maslahah nearly 70% of youth rely on these platforms for mental health information (Alonzo & Popescu, 2021; Saha et al., 2019). Among these, Instagram serves as a key visual tool for peer support and expert engagement (Capozzo, 2023; Naslund et al., 2020), though risks of misinformation and mental disorder trivialization persist (Peng et al., 2022). A digital campaign employs online tools to promote specific messaging, challenging misconceptions through relatable narratives (De Vere Hunt & Linos, 2022; Ferrari et al., 2021; Teo et al., 2024). Hashtags like #WorldMental HealthDay unify audiences to increase campaign visibility (Ta'amneh & Al-Ghazo, 2021). When applied ethically, digital campaigns align with Islamic principles such as da'wah (inviting to goodness) and maslahah (social benefit). Promoting mental health awareness fulfills hifz al-'aql (preservation of intellect), an objective of maqasid al-shariah. Incorporating values like rahmah (compassion), ukhuwah (brotherhood), and tawakkul enhances community trust and overall well-being (Mahmud & Mustapha, 2022).

Framing Theory

The concept was initially presented by Erving Goffman in 1974, who described frames as interpretive structures that help individuals make sense of the world. The theory was later expanded by Robert Entman (1993), who provided a widely accepted definition of framing within communication studies. According to Entman (1993), framing refers to the process of selecting specific elements of perceived reality and emphasising them in communication to shape audience interpretation and response. He identifies four fundamental framing functions: problem definition, which describes the nature of an issue; causal interpretation, which identifies the main sources or factors contributing to the problem; moral evaluation, which assesses the issue or its causes through ethical or emotional judgment; and treatment recommendation, which proposes possible solutions or actions to address the problem.

In today's digital age, how a message is framed, such as how content is structured and the narrative is presented strongly influences user engagement in social media campaigns (Güran & Özarslan, 2022). Through selective emphasis, images, and hashtags, content creators and organisations define what aspects of an issue are

highlighted and how audiences should feel about it. In this study, Framing Theory is applied to examine how the #WorldMentalHealthDay campaign constructs and communicates mental health messages on Instagram. Guided by Entman's (1993) model, the analysis explores how campaign posts define mental health challenges (problem definition) interpret causes (causal interpretation), encourage empathy and compassion (moral evaluation), recommend actions (treatment recommendation). Through these four elements, the contents create narratives that can shape public opinion (Manap & Scorpiantrien, 2025).

These framing functions collectively demonstrate how the campaign will shape audience perceptions and motivate engagement through empowering, relatable narratives. This strategic framing encourages users to view mental health not as a taboo but as part of daily life. Recent research shows that when mental-health content on Instagram is framed in a positive, anti-stigma way, it tends to receive higher engagement and this framing helps to reduce perceived mental health stigma (Jia et al., 2023; Koinig, 2022).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Epistemological Framework

This study adopts a qualitative case study research design to systematically examine the framing strategies and audience engagement within digital health advocacy, specifically focusing on the #WorldMentalHealthDay campaign on Instagram. Methodologically, the research is positioned within a constructivist paradigm, which posits that reality is socially constructed, fluid, and continuously negotiated through discourse and media interaction. This epistemological stance is essential for examining public health messaging on social media, where meaning is not merely transmitted from sender to receiver but is actively co-created within digital ecosystems. The study connects three distinct methodological traditions. The bounded case study framework serves as the macro-structure, establishing the structural parameters of the investigation by isolating the #WorldMentalHealthDay campaign within its real-world digital setting (Yin, 2014). Within this case, qualitative content analysis is used to decode the production mechanics of the sender, analyzing how content creators package, define, and evaluate health issues based on Entman's (1993) framing functions (Kuckartz & Radiker, 2023). This is closely paired with thematic analysis to focus on the receiver's visible interaction, capturing how the audience interprets and engages with these digital narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study evaluates text-based comment discourse to trace public engagement. These approaches complement each other by capturing both sides of the communicative circuit, allowing the findings to reveal whether the strategic frames deployed in the video assets align with or disconnect from the thematic patterns observed in the corresponding comment threads.

Data Collection Procedure, Sampling Rationale and Coding Protocols

The data collection process involves public Instagram Reels and their associated public user comments under the hashtag #WorldMentalHealthDay. Basic metadata, including postdate, content creator username, and number of views are also recorded. According to Hai-Jew (2016), there are three main types of data collection from Instagram:

- a) Content data: the posts, stories, reels that people share on the Instagram platform and feed.
- b) Metadata: the descriptive or labelling information such as hashtag
- c) Trace data: related to interaction data or relational data such as comments, views, and likes

To preserve absolute transparency and empirical rigor, a purposive sampling strategy was applied to select five specific video assets based on strict methodological parameters, aligning with the abstract's focus on high-engagement Instagram Reels. The temporal boundary was restricted to content published exclusively within October 2025, capturing the peak algorithmic density and public attention cycle immediately surrounding World Mental Health Day on October 10. The format standardization was limited to "Reels" to isolate the unique multimodal affordances, such as synchronized audio, visual overlays, on-screen text, and rapid swipe-based delivery, which are distinct from static grid images or ephemeral Stories. Additionally, a strict minimum benchmark of 100,000 views was enforced to filter out low-reach or private posts, ensuring the sample reflects widely circulated, highly amplified digital health narratives that generated significant public discourse and audience interaction. To capture the interactional trace data generated by these video frames, a systematic interval sampling technique was executed to extract user comments. For each of the five selected Reels, every fifth comment (N=5) was extracted, yielding a standardized sample of 10 comments per video. This systematic approach eliminates selection bias, handles large data streams objectively, and maintains structural consistency across cases. Saturation was observed within these intervals, as the textual and symbolic expressions began yielding redundant semantic patterns, primarily emotional validation and support, past the midpoints of the sample arrays, providing an empirical foundation for evaluating how audiences interpret and engage with these digital narratives.

To ensure analytical trustworthiness and prevent subjective interpretation, a structured coding protocol was developed based on Entman's (1993) four framing functions, which consist of defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral evaluations, and suggesting remedies. The qualitative content analysis followed an explicit, rule-guided deductive process, where on-screen text and spoken transcripts were mapped directly to these predetermined theoretical dimensions to determine how creators utilize specific strategies to normalize mental health struggles and reduce social stigma. Concurrently, an inductive coding process was used for the thematic analysis of user comments to capture authentic audience expressions without forcing them.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Five Instagram Reels that met the sampling criteria which is over 100,000 views, that posted on October 2025 were analysed. These videos were created by different individuals and organisations, including public figures and institutional accounts, allowing for diverse perspectives on mental health awareness. The following are information:

Table 1: Overview of Selected Instagram Reels for #WorldMentalHealthDay Campaign			
No.	Profile Name	Postdate	Views
1	@cross. novia	10 October 2025	107k
2	@masterclass	11 October 2025	565k
3	@who	10 October 2025	654k
4	@scottishdogbehaviourist	10 October 2025	1.3m
5	@paulscanlonuk	11 October 2025	2.4m

Key Messages Communicated by Content Creators within the #WorldMentalHealthDay Campaign

To understand the core communication dynamics of the #WorldMentalHealthDay campaign on Instagram, the analysis extracts and evaluates the strategic messaging constructed by content creators through spoken narration and on-screen text. Guided by Entman’s (1993) Framing Theory, this analysis moves beyond a descriptive post-by-post breakdown to synthesize systemic messaging patterns across the entire cross-case corpus. By evaluating how the collective text functions across all five selected videos, a distinct narrative hierarchy emerges. Rather than balancing technical medical definitions, structural causes, and explicit institutional treatment pathways, the creators systematically concentrate their messaging infrastructure within the dimensions of moral evaluation and problem definition. This conscious narrative choice produces a specific structural density across the corpus, where moral evaluations and universal problem definitions serve as the foundational framing elements across all cases, while explicit behavioral remedies and causal interpretations appear with significantly lower density, serving merely as localized supporting narratives.

The table below summarises the quotes, their associated codes, and the themes derived from each video.

Table 2: Content Analysis of Video 1 – Quotes, Coding, and Themes
VIDEO 1: @cross. novia

QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
Today is 10th October and it's not just a regular day, it's World Mental Health Day.	Awareness of mental health importance	Problem definition
Something that affects all of us and I want you to know that if you're still struggling, of suffering, or experiencing the pain, it does not make you lesser of a human.	- Normalizing struggle - Affirming self-worth	Moral evaluation
Because healing, recovering, and sitting with that pain, it's the only way to your happiness.	Healing as a process of acceptance towards happiness	Treatment recommendations
So, stop trying to convince yourself that you're wasting your life away. You're not.	Reminding the process of recovery itself is valuable and not a waste	Moral Evaluation
It's necessary and you're not alone.	Offering collective support	Peer support
Happy World Mental Health Day.	Acknowledging the Mental Health Issue	Problem definition

The consistent reliance on moral framing across institutional and individual creators reveals a socio-technical shift in digital health advocacy away from traditional informational campaigns toward therapeutic, identity-driven communication. Creators deploy moral evaluations to re-direct the meaning of psychological suffering, shifting public discourse from a clinical framework or individual defect to a shared manifestation of human vulnerability; for instance, the micro-influencer stating that pain "does not make you lesser of a human" works in tandem with institutional claims like the World Health Organization declaring that depression is human being, not weakness. Consequently, the root causes of mental distress are rarely attributed to external systemic economic conditions; instead, when causal interpretations are introduced, they are downplayed as interpersonal friction, "mind tricks," or "suffering in silence." This strategic decision transforms digital health advocacy into a space focused on self-worth affirmation and non-linear recovery validation while structurally sidelining the dissemination of technical health resources or actionable healthcare navigation.

Table 3: Content Analysis of Video 2 – Quotes, Coding, and Themes

VIDEO 2: @masterclass		
QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
I just wanted to say to you that, whether or not you suffer from mental health issues, so many people do, and it's so important to speak up about it.	• Acknowledging the significance of mental health issue • Encouraging to voice about it	• Problem definition • Moral Evaluation
Speak to someone near you, or if you know a friend, take a moment to text them, or give them a call	• Recommending reaching out friends by calling or text	• Treatment recommendation
Let them know you're thinking about them, find out how they're doing.	• Encouraging empathy and showing concern	• Treatment recommendation
Support them in any way you can, because there's so many people that are suffering in silence.	• Giving support • Identifying silence as the cause of suffering	• Peer support • Causal interpretation
Naturally, it's such a beautiful world we live in.	• Moral affirmation of life's value	• Moral Evaluation
Life is tough and it's great to give out an olive branch to some people, just so they know they're not alone.	• Acknowledging life's difficulties • Offering gesture of peace and connection	• Problem definition • Peer support

The structural architecture of Video 2 (@masterclass) shifts the digital health narrative from individual introspection toward a model of relational interventionism, operationalizing its frames to advocate for direct social mobilization. Exposing why a high-status cultural platform relies heavily on casual outreach, the narrative broadens public participation while simultaneously minimizing the perceived need for specialized, structural psychological care, reflecting a trend noted by Latha et al. (2020) where digital campaigns routinely position peer-to-peer communication as an accessible intervention. The text transforms basic peer attention into an act of ethical virtue, urging viewers to give out an olive branch so others know they are not alone and framing social checking mechanisms as high-status moral traits. Ultimately, by synthesizing peer support frames with soft interpersonal remedies, the text shifts the burden of care away from strained systemic medical infrastructures onto the individual user's digital network, narrowing the scope of health literacy to personal check-ins.

Table 4: Content Analysis of Video 3 – Quotes, Coding, and Themes

VIDEO 3: @who		
QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
Depression can touch anyone.	Identify depression as a common human condition	Problem definition
It's not weakness. It's being human.	Reject weakness label and consider it as a part of human experience	Moral Evaluation
Some days weigh even heavier than others.	Describe emotional burden	Problem definition
You don't have to carry that weight alone. Speak to someone you trust.	Encouragement to seek support and speak up	Treatment recommendation
Even small steps, a pause or a walk, can help.	Offers some simple coping process	Coping strategies
You matter.	Affirm the worth of the individual	Moral evaluation
Help is available.	Reassurance of help	Treatment recommendation

The narrative structure of Video 3 (@who) presents a significant rhetorical tension between high-level moral evaluation and low-intensity behavioral adaptation. While a premier global health authority possesses the clinical weight to offer dense public health resources, its campaign narrative actively prioritizes universal de-stigmatization over medical mobilization by establishing a democratic problem definition ("depression can touch anyone") that uncouples depression from specialized mental illness. A clear paradox emerges between the scale of the problem and the remedy: while moral evaluations ("It's not weakness. It's being human") are robust and explicitly designed to neutralize internal shame, the transitioning coping strategies are noticeably low-stakes, suggesting that "even small steps, a pause or a walk, can help." By elevating basic lifestyle adjustments while leaving formal medical treatment unmentioned, the narrative risks downplaying recovery for professional clinical responsibilities onto severe clinical disorders and unloads untrained social networks, proving that even global medical authorities simplify complex medical interventions into short, comforting quotes.

Table 5: Content Analysis of Video 4 – Quotes, Coding, and Themes

VIDEO 4: @scottishdogbehaviourist		
QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
What's the bravest thing you've ever said?	Questioning emotional courage	Problem definition
Asking for help isn't giving up. It's refusing to give up	Reframing help-seeking positively	Moral evaluation
Always remember you're enough. Just as you are.	Self-worth affirmation	Moral evaluation
You know sometimes your mind plays tricks on you. It can tell you're not good. That's all hopeless.	Negative self-talk	Causal interpretation
But I've discovered this, you are loved and important	Acknowledging the values of individual	Moral evaluation
and you bring to this world things that no one else can.	Affirming individual self-worth	Moral evaluation
So hold on.	Encouragement to persist	Treatment recommendation
What do you dream about? Home.	Desire for belonging	Problem definition
What's that like? I don't know	Lack of security	Causal interpretation
I'm not sure but I know I need one.	Need for safety and support	Coping strategies

The narrative structure of Video 4 (@scottishdogbehaviourist) centers on positive reframing to alter traditional perceptions of vulnerability, defining help-seeking not as failure but as an assertion of resilience ("refusing to give up"). By framing perseverance through direct calls to "hold on" and affirming individual self-worth ("you bring to this world things that no one else can"), the text encourages viewers to endure emotional distress through personal resolve rather than external clinical support.

Negative psychological states are attributed directly to cognitive distortions ("your mind plays tricks on you"), locating both the origin of suffering and its management within the individual's mental state. While this messaging provides immediate comfort by elevating self-worth and belonging, it omits concrete, actionable steps or professional healthcare pathways. Consequently, digital health advocacy is maintained as a message of personal endurance and emotional self-containment rather than a guided entry point into formal clinical care.

Table 6: Content Analysis of Video 5 – Quotes, Coding, and Themes

VIDEO 5: @paulscanlonuk		
QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
It's okay to cut off toxic family members out of your life.	Cutting off people as a protection to oneself	Treatment recommendation
Blood is not thicker than mental health.	Prioritize mental health over families' ties	Moral evaluation
Some people in your life are damaging your mental health. It's that bad?	Identify specific people as a threat to individual's mental health	Problem definition
And you let it happen because they're family.	Diagnose the reason for the harm that happen	Causal interpretation

The narrative style of Video 5 (@paulscanlonuk) breaks away from gentle coping by adopting a blunt, confrontational tone that externalizes the threat to interpersonal relationships. By asserting that "some people in your life are damaging your mental health," the creator shifts the issue from internal emotional management to ongoing external harm. The core strategy lies in its provocative causal interpretation-arguing that users prolong pain out of blind loyalty ("you let it happen because they're family")-and flipping traditional social proverbs by declaring that "blood is not thicker than mental health." This pattern-interrupting framing elevates personal safety above unconditional family ties, re-framing relational severance as a high-status act of self-preservation. Ultimately, the video validates a sharp behavioral break ("It's okay to cut off toxic family members") as a primary treatment recommendation, reflecting modern digital trends that embrace firm boundary-setting as vital self-care.

Analysis on User Engagement

User Engagement and Audiences Interaction with #WorldMentalHealthDay Content

To ensure conceptual continuity across this investigation, this section moves beyond creator-focused framing analysis to critically examine the nature of user engagement. By evaluating the comment sections, this analysis evaluates how the strategic frames embedded within the digital health narratives actively trigger, shape, and maintain specific forms of audience engagement and interaction.

The empirical evidence demonstrates that social media users do not engage with these videos as passive consumers or information-seeking patients. Instead, their interaction patterns directly mirror the creator's moral evaluation and problem definition frames. This structural alignment between message construction and audience response effectively transforms the public comment feed into a highly active, communal, and affective space centered on shared solidarity rather than technical health information.

Table 7: Thematic Analysis of User Comments for Video 1

VIDEO 1			
COMMENT NUMBER (NTH)	QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
5	♡♡♡♡	Affirm the emotional value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
10	The next time you feel pain, and not just physical. Try to think about what you can learn from that situation. We grow the most in the hardest times, but only when you focus on what you can learn from it.	Suggesting transforming pain and difficult situations into personal growth	Treatment recommendations
15	Today is a reminder to us that healing isn't linear — but having someone who encourages us to keep going makes all the difference. Grateful for those who remind us to care for ourselves, even when the world feels heavy. Thank you @cross.novia & everyone here 🙏💕 your presence, concern made a difference!	- Acknowledging non-linear recovery - The power of encouragements from external social support - Expressing gratitude for being there	- Problem definition - Peer support - Moral evaluation
20	☐	Affirm the positive value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
25	Thankyou ♡	- Expression of appreciation - The contents are beneficial and worthy of thanks	Moral evaluation
30	☐☐	Affirm the positive value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
35	Thank you for this message 🙏	Expressing of appreciation and positive impact	Peer support

40	Thank you for this, truly. I really needed to hear this today	Expressing gratitude toward the relevance of the message	Moral evaluation
45	♡	Affirm the emotional value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
50	Yeah still. Struggle	Defining the continuing state of struggle	Problem definition

An analytical breakdown indicates a clear bifurcation in how audiences engage with #WorldMental Health Day narratives, moving between high-effort textual reflections and low-friction symbolic responses. When users dedicate cognitive effort to compose full text, their engagement demonstrates an internalization of the campaign's core message; for instance, observing that "Today is a reminder to us that healing isn't linear" shows the user actively co-constructing the narrative alongside the digital advocate to validate recovery realities. Expressions such as "I really needed to hear this today" highlight how moral validation serves as an emotional hook, prompting users to break silence and acknowledge ongoing challenges ("Yeah still. Struggle"). Conversely, when users shift toward symbolic gestures or transactional advice, community response remains minimal. Engagement in this digital advocacy space is heavily driven by a desire for peer support, systematically sidelining problem-solving or clinical action plans and proving that user interaction directly mirrors the creator's moral and problem definition frames.

Parasocial Credibility and the Negotiation of Social Realities in User Engagement

When examining user engagement, the interaction dynamics shift from general community solidarity to a deep focus on public figure credibility and celebrity modeling. Rather than merely reacting to an abstract health concept, the audience engages heavily with the specific identity and lived experience of the influencer featured. This structural pattern proves that the engagement is primarily driven by moral evaluation and peer support, catalyzed by the public figure's personal authenticity. The text profile shows that users use the comment section to co-construct an ethical framework around what it means to be vulnerable. Instead of looking at the video as an objective health announcement, the audience views it as a way for emotional resilience.

Table 8: Thematic Analysis of User Comments for Video 2

VIDEO 2			
COMMENT NUMBER (NTH)	QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
5	🥰👏👏	Expressing support to show the positive impact of the message	Peer support
10	It's so important that Lewis who is grieving and feels sad after Roscoes loss to speak up and give strength to others I need. So much respect for him and a great role model 🙌❤️👏	Realising the importance of speak up	Moral evaluation
15	Always such a wonderful role model @lewishamilton ❤️	- Affirms the public figure as a good role - Acknowledging positive energy from the public figure - Willingness to speak out	- Moral evaluation - Causal interpretation
20	Someone said, life is easy. We should meet, i have a question for that someone	- Defining the misconception about life - Expressing disagreement	- Problem definition - Misinformation
25	See people this is a sporting icon that's never forgotten where he came from pure class 🏆👏	Expressing gratitude because remains authentic	Peer support
30	It's so hard 😞	Defining the current reality or state mental health as "so hard"	Problem definition
35	Real strength isn't loud — it's steady. Respect to Lewis for reminding people what real courage looks like 🙌	- Defining the meaning of real strength - Expressing gratitude	- Problem definition - Moral evaluation
40	So important, Sir Hamilton 🙏👏	Acknowledging the importance of the message	Moral evaluation

45	❤️	Affirm the emotional value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
50	🙌🙌	Expressing support to show the positive impact of the message	Peer support

Public figures spark deep moral reflection while prompting users to challenge overly simplistic views of life. When users compose full sentences, their engagement ties directly to the influencer's moral authority; a comment like "Real strength isn't loud - it is steady. Respect to Lewis for reminding people what real courage looks like" shows the audience redefining masculinity and emotional expression, shifting vulnerability from a sign of failure to a high-status trait. Similarly, noting that it is "so important that Lewis who is grieving...to speak up" shows how influencer-led advocacy lowers emotional barriers, allowing users to challenge toxic positivity ("Someone said, life is easy. We should meet. I have a question for that someone"). The public figure acts as a cultural anchor to push back against unrealistic social expectations, though it remains critical to distinguish these articulate responses from single-click emojis, which function as effortless, automatic gestures rather than deep reflection.

Interpersonal Advocacy and Structural Isolation in User Engagement

When analyzing user engagement with Video 3 (@who), the interaction data reveals a deep tension between collective comfort and the harsh realities of personal isolation. The broad community engagement aligns perfectly with the creator's moral evaluation frame, with users overwhelmingly celebrating the comment section as an unexpected digital sanctuary. Despite of that, beneath this layer of mutual encouragement lies a sharp break in the narrative. While the majority of users engage by reinforcing the video's ideal message, a vulnerable segment of the audience uses the comment space to expose a massive gap between institutional advice and their own lived experiences. The analysis of the comment section highlights how a campaign's call to action can accidentally expose the very limitations of the support systems it recommends.

Table 9: Thematic Analysis of User Comments for Video 3

VIDEO 3			
COMMENT NUMBER (NTH)	QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
5	☺☺☺☺☺	Non-verbal encouragement	Moral evaluation
10	Thank you for spreading the word and platform about this topic. Appreciate this safe space for all! ♡	Expressing gratitude towards the creator's effort	Moral evaluation
15	♡♡♡	Affirm the emotional value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
20	Hugs to everyone ♡ you're not alone ☺	Promotes emotional support and connection	Treatment recommendation
25	such an important message! 🤝	Acknowledging the relevant of the message	Peer support
30	♡♡♡	Affirm the positive value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
35	A simple but powerful reminder ♡ Talking about how we feel is the first step toward healing — no one should face depression alone	- Expressing gratitude - Reminding "speaking out" as a main solution	- Moral evaluation - Treatment recommendation
40	What if I dnt have anyone to speak to 😞	Identify the absence of support connection as a barrier to heal	Problem definition
45	Thank you for spreading this important message, and love how @lizpop_art brought it to life.♡	Expressing gratitude towards the creator's effort	Moral evaluation

50	There's no one. That we can trust.	• Identify a lack of trustworthy people as the reason for continued suffering	• Causal interpretation
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When engaging through written text, users echo the campaign's ideal treatment recommendations, such as "Talking about how we feel is the first step toward healing- no one should face depression alone," actively collaborating to build a supportive digital network. However, relying heavily on informal, conversational remedies triggers pushback from isolated users. Comments like "What if I dnt have anyone to speak to" and "There's no one. That we can trust" represent critical problem definitions that disrupt the campaign's optimistic tone, offering a bleak causal interpretation for continued suffering. This interaction exposes the "Safe Space Paradox" inherent in digital health advocacy: while campaigns successfully leverage platforms to build widespread empathy, relying on informal social circles inadvertently alienates individuals who lack trustworthy real-world networks, turning engagement for those users into an expression of abandonment.

Affective Resonance in User Engagement

When analyzing user engagement with Video 4 (@scottishdogbehaviourist), the interaction patterns demonstrate a highly emotional form of audience participation. The comment section functions primarily through moral evaluation, where users actively evaluate the social media product based on its ability to trigger intense personal feelings and unlock deep emotional responses. However, the analysis of the data shows a clear divide in the engagement: while the dominant community response celebrates the video as an emotional masterpiece, a significant portion of the audience uses the comment section to process deep, unresolved trauma and highlight the systemic failures of their real-world support networks.

Table 10: Thematic Analysis of User Comments for Video 4

VIDEO 4			
COMMENT NUMBER (NTH)	QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
5	♡	Affirm the emotional value of the video's messages	Moral evaluation
10	👍♡♡👍	Expressing support to show the positive impact of the message	Moral evaluation
15	Nah been stabbed n shot too many times to ask for help. I just tell people stories occasionally.	Points to past trauma as the reason to not ask for help	Causal interpretation
20	I tried to ask for help, but no one help	Frames the issue as a failure of the community to respond	Problem definition
25	I'm crying. That is a masterpiece!	Evaluated the video based on emotional reaction	Moral evaluation
30	This always sets off my emotions	Personal emotional vulnerability	Moral evaluation
35	I have a home and I'm grateful I wish I could share it with you	Empathy towards others	Moral evaluation
40	It's the hardest thing to do. Nobody wants to admit they're struggling. Best friends should notice. Three words could help: "are you okay?" Try them. ♡	- Define the hardness to speak up - Difficulty admitting struggles - Importance of checking in	- Problem definition - Causal interpretation - Treatment recommendation
45	It's hard to ask for help...	Define the difficulty to seek help	Problem definition

50	This is such a beautiful message. Thank you for sharing it. ♥♥♥	Expressing gratitude to show the positive impact of the message	Moral evaluation
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Written comments reveal the video serves as a powerful trigger for personal vulnerability ("I'm crying. That is a masterpiece!"), creating a moment of shared psychological connection where audiences validate feelings of empathy.

However, attempting to rebrand help-seeking as courage also triggers disruptive responses; comment N15 offers a blunt causal interpretation for choosing isolation ("Nah been stabbed n shot too many times to ask for help"), showing how past trauma breaks trust and leads users to reject optimistic messaging. Similarly, "I tried to ask for help, but no one help" exposes a painful reality: when online campaigns frame asking for help as courageous, they risk re-traumatizing individuals whose real-world communities have failed them. Faced with these disclosures, community capacity remains limited to informal peer check-ins ("are you okay? Try them"), completely omitting formal medical, therapeutic, or institutional crisis pathways.

Interpersonal Boundary-Setting and the Collective Validation in User Engagement

When analyzing user engagement in Video 5 (@paulscanlonuk), the interaction dynamics shift dramatically from general comfort to a highly active defense of personal boundaries. The comment section is dominated by peer support and moral evaluation, functioning as a digital platform where users actively seek and grant permission to break away from harmful cultural norms. Unlike previous videos that focused on internal emotional coping, this text corpus shows that users engage by validating external behavioral changes. They use the comment section to explicitly celebrate the act of cutting ties with toxic environments as a necessary, high-status choice for psychological survival.

Table 11: Thematic Analysis of User Comments for Video 5

VIDEO 5			
COMMENT NUMBER (NTH)	QUOTES	CODING	THEMES
5	So true! 🙏	Expressing support to show the positive impact of the message	Peer support
10	Yes 🙏	Expressing agreement with the messages	Peer support
15	Amen.... Totally agree. Cut the cord from my narcissistic mother. I've had enough of the abuse. Sometimes I think it's bad but protecting my mental health. I'm choosing "me" for once. Cutting generation curse and not passing it to my children is the best thing ❤️	- Identify "no contact" as the solution - Acknowledging the factor - Prioritizing mental health over family ties	- Treatment recommendation - Causal interpretation - Coping strategies
20	It's not only okay. Sometimes it is necessary and an act of selflove and respect 🙏	Propose the importance of self-love and self-respect	Moral evaluation
25	And I still sending them loves n lights from a distance	Showing love and care from distance	Treatment recommendation
30	Very true!	Expressing agreement	Peer support
	Thanks	Expressing gratitude	Peer support
35	Mental health is priority I suffer borderline personality disorder all my life and PTSD anxiety and depression and i learn that the cause	- Define mental health as prioritization - Linking a mental health diagnosis to childhood traumas	- Problem definition - Causal interpretation

	of it is my extreme trauma on my mother who used to bully me since i was born and always abuse me physically and mentally to the point that i was hating myself my whole life and not wanting to be me		
40	So true <u>100</u> <u>100</u> <u>100</u>	• Showing support	• Peer support
45	I cut off my toxic family few years ago. I been free since then. I can't believe how light my shoulders now.	• Validates by cutting ties show positive emotional outcome	• Treatment recommendation • Coping strategies
50	♥♥♥	• Affirm the emotional value of the video's messages	• Moral evaluation

Users engaging with Video 5 display an intense internalization of the creator's confrontational message. Comments like "Cut the cord... I'm choosing 'me' for once" demonstrate that users adopt this content as an empowering treatment recommendation, reframing boundary-setting from a painful family failure into a heroic coping strategy. Sharing positive emotional outcomes ("I cut off my toxic family... I can't believe how light my shoulders now") reassures peers that severe emotional distancing is a legitimate path to peace. Furthermore, this framing prompts analytical causal interpretations, as seen in comment N35, where a user maps adult clinical diagnoses directly to historical childhood abuse.

The online community uses this thread to validate a complete flip in traditional morals: blind family loyalty is rejected, and personal psychological safety is crowned as the ultimate ethical duty ("Sometimes it is necessary and an act of selflove and respect").

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored the role of the #WorldMentalHealthDay campaign on Instagram in shaping digital health communication and tracing user engagement patterns. Grounded in Entman's (1993) Framing Theory, the qualitative case study evaluated five high-engagement Instagram Reels alongside a thematic analysis of their corresponding comment streams. The findings demonstrate that within this specific campaign, the analyzed Reels functioned primarily as communal, affective spaces for solidarity rather than as informational technical health literacy.

Content creators leaned heavily on moral evaluation and problem definition to normalize mental health struggles and reduce social stigma. Messages frequently prioritized affirming individual self-worth and reframing recovery as a valuable, non-linear process. In response, user engagement largely reflected high levels of emotional resonance, characterized by peer support and shared vulnerability. While dominant framing strategies particularly those centered on self-worth, compassion, and universality were highly effective at capturing public attention and generating empathy, practical coping strategies and causal interpretations remained rare supporting notes. When treatment recommendations were provided, they heavily emphasized informal peer connection. This pattern highlights a critical paradox: the campaign succeeds at making people feel seen, but routinely unloads institutional public health responsibilities onto untrained, everyday social networks.

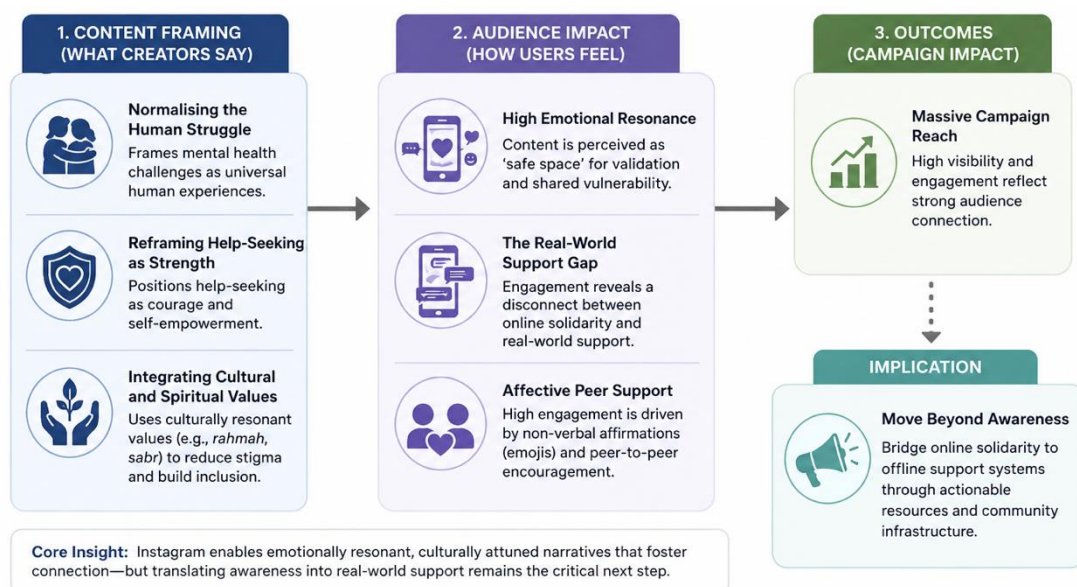


Figure 1: Visualisation of the Important Findings

By applying Framing Theory to social media engagement analysis, this study contributes a clearer perspective on digital campaign, communication and health related scholarship. First, it bridges the gap between strategic message construction and active user engagement. Rather than treating audiences as passive users, the research identified how specific moral and emotional frames act as triggers that pull viewers into open, public dialogue. Second, this research addresses a major critique in digital media methodology by establishing a strict boundary between explicit text data and ambiguous, low-friction interactions. By separating articulate, lived-experience text comments from single-click emoji strings (like hearts and applause), the study prevents the common research trap of over-interpreting fast, automated smartphone gestures as deep psychological alignment. This preserves analytical rigor while still honoring the community's genuine expressions and/or mutual validation.

Furthermore, within specific cultural and regional contexts, digital advocacy can be significantly strengthened by integrating specialized local values. For instance, campaigns tailored toward Muslim-majority communities can highly benefit by harmonizing modern psychological advice with deeply understood Islamic ethical principles, such as *rahmah* (compassion), *sabr* (patience), and *tawakkul* (trust in God). Weaving these familiar concepts into the narrative helps untangle the deep cultural shame and spiritual guilt often associated with mental illness. This multi-layered framing ensures that seeking medical help is perceived as both socially appropriate and culturally respectful, significantly lowering the barriers to real-world clinical care.

Notwithstanding, the research examined a single campaign, a sample of five high-engagement Reels, and one specific platform (Instagram). Therefore, these findings represent an illustrative case study of digital campaign mechanics, not an absolute rule for all social media behavior across the internet. As the study relied purely on public, text-based comment feeds, it did not include direct participant interviews or user surveys. Consequently, it can map public engagement patterns, but it cannot definitively measure hidden private conversations or verify changes in an individual's private, long-term personal attitude. To build upon these insights, future research should execute cross-platform comparative studies such as contrasting the visual, community-driven ecosystem of Instagram with the rapid, algorithmic delivery loops of TikTok. Additionally, combining content analysis with direct audience surveys would allow future communication scholars to track exactly how online empathy and digital engagement translate into real-world health-seeking behaviors.

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- Siti Nur Ashiqqin Mohd Asha'ari: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing.
- Kartini Kamaruzzaman: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Analysis Review, Supervision, Writing – Review & Editing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to this study.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical standards. Data were collected from publicly available open-source platforms. AI tools were utilised to assist with visualisation, language editing and proofreading.

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