

Operational Responsiveness and Technostress in Instant Messaging: Evaluating Field Communication Efficiency and Digital Governance Needs

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Abstract – This study investigates workplace communication dynamics and operational friction resulting from WhatsApp reliance among field cleaning staff at PT Megah Resik Selaras, operating within RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai Jambi. Although instant messaging accelerates operational responsiveness, the absence of digital governance introduces information overload, message burial, and work-life boundary blurring. Integrating Marshall McLuhan's media theory ("cool medium") with Boundary Theory and the Stressor-Strain-Outcome model, this qualitative embedded single-case study evaluated field coordination practices. Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews with five key informants, six weeks of passive group chat observation, and archival documentation, followed by thematic analysis. Findings reveal that WhatsApp functions as a dynamic multimodal tool—utilizing time-stamped photos and voice notes, to bypass literacy barriers and streamline shift handovers. However, unstructured messaging routinely buries critical emergency sanitization directives, triggering operational delays and inducing technostress from constant availability expectations. Consequently, instant messaging alone is structurally unsuited for formal archiving. To retain operational speed without compromising worker well-being, organizations must implement formal WhatsApp Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), enforce digital communication ethics, and migrate historical compliance records to structured archival platforms.

Kata Kunci: WhatsApp, workplace communication, cool medium, technostress, boundary blurring, operational governance

Dilema Pesan Instan dalam Organisasi: Analisis Responsivitas Operasional, Teknostres, dan Tata Kelola Digital

Abstrak – Penelitian ini mengkaji dinamika komunikasi kerja dan friksi operasional akibat ketergantungan pada WhatsApp di kalangan petugas *cleaning service* lapangan PT Megah Resik Selaras di RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai Jambi. Meskipun pesan instan mempercepat responsivitas operasional, ketiadaan tata kelola digital memicu kelebihan informasi (*information overload*), tertimbunnya pesan, dan pengaburan batas kerja-kehidupan pribadi. Mengintegrasikan teori media Marshall McLuhan (*cool medium*), *Boundary Theory*, dan model *Stressor-Strain-Outcome*, studi kasus tunggal tersemat (*embedded single-case study*) kualitatif ini mengevaluasi praktik koordinasi lapangan. Data primer dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan lima informan kunci, enam minggu observasi pasif pada grup obrolan, dan dokumentasi arsip, yang dilanjutkan dengan analisis tematik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa WhatsApp berfungsi sebagai media multimodal dinamis—menggunakan foto berstempel waktu dan pesan suara—untuk mengatasi hambatan literasi serta mempermudah operan *shift*. Namun, pesan tidak terstruktur sering kali menimbun instruksi sterilisasi darurat yang krusial, memicu keterlambatan operasional dan *technostress* akibat tuntutan keterhubungan terus-menerus. Akibatnya, pesan instan saja secara struktural tidak memadai untuk pengarsipan formal. Untuk mempertahankan kecepatan operasional tanpa mengorbankan kesejahteraan pekerja, organisasi harus menerapkan SOP WhatsApp resmi, menegakkan etika komunikasi digital, dan memindahkan catatan kepatuhan ke platform pengarsipan terstruktur.

Keywords: WhatsApp, komunikasi organisasi, cool medium, technostress, pengaburan batas kerja, tata kelola operasional

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has fundamentally transformed interaction patterns within modern organizations, particularly through the widespread adoption of mobile instant messaging applications for daily workflow coordination. In contemporary organizational environments, WhatsApp functions as a primary communication medium for mobile employees at PT Megah Resik Selaras because it enables real-time exchange of messages, files, instructions, and cross-location coordination, thereby accelerating field responsiveness and fostering connected teamwork (Abdelhay et al., 2024; Farzana et al., 2024; Jabbar et al., 2020; Ulhaq et al., 2026; Yang & Feng, 2024). Numerous studies confirm that WhatsApp effectively facilitates information sharing, clarifies coordination, reduces communication delays, and supports both vertical and horizontal communication—attributes that are highly relevant for cleaning service operations demanding high mobility and rapid instructions (Abdelhay et al., 2024; Farzana et al., 2024; Neiroukh et al., 2024).

Within Marshall McLuhan's theoretical framework, the premise that "the medium is the message" implies that the communication medium is not a neutral conduit; rather, WhatsApp's structural properties as a mobile, personal, and continuously connected medium actively shape the scale, rhythm, and structural patterns of work interactions beyond mere message content (Biondi, 2025; Lotherington, 2018). Consequently, the adoption of WhatsApp in corporate environments does not merely streamline information dissemination, but also fosters a workplace culture that is faster, more responsive, informal, and heavily reliant on employees' daily digital connectivity (Huang & Zhang, 2019; Lotherington, 2018; Mols & Pridmore, 2020; Neiroukh et al., 2024). In McLuhan's typology, WhatsApp functions as an interactive "cool medium"—a medium characterized by truncated text, voice notes, and low definition that demands active cognitive participation and contextual interpretation from field workers to complete the message structure (McLuhan, 1964).

To clarify the empirical scope of this study, the research focuses specifically on the operational project site of PT Megah Resik Selaras at RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai Polda Jambi. Preliminary observations and initial interviews conducted with field supervisors revealed critical operational challenges in this high-stakes medical facility. Specifically, where specialized sanitation protocols in vital zones (e.g., isolation wards and emergency units) require precise execution, reliance on unmanaged WhatsApp groups frequently generated operational misalignments. Urgent instructions became buried under informal group messages, leading to delayed sanitization responses, unverified task completions, and occasional formal complaints from hospital management. Furthermore, existing literature underscores that the same medium carries distinct organizational and personal costs: continuous messaging triggers work interruptions, information overload, technostress, and the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life (Farivar et al., 2022; Hurbean et al., 2022; Jabbar et al., 2020; Kasim et al., 2022; Mols & Pridmore, 2020; Yang & Feng, 2024).

Prior academic scholarship has widely examined WhatsApp in organizational contexts, yet critical literature gaps remain. Previous empirical studies have predominantly focused on administrative staff, office-based environments, or educational institutions using quantitative surveys to measure communication effectiveness (e.g., Ningrum & Pramonojati, 2019; Pradesti et al., 2022; Yahya & Dirgantara, 2022). While studies have evaluated general communication performance, WhatsApp is often perceived as more suitable for rapid, informal interaction,

whereas formal communication and archiving require dedicated official platforms like email or structured documentation systems (Abdelhay et al., 2024; Jabbar et al., 2020). Moreover, ambiguous communication norms give rise to paradoxes surrounding engagement, formality, and visibility, forcing employees to construct self-regulated strategies to manage response expectations, digital presenteeism, and professional boundaries (He, 2025; Huang & Zhang, 2019). Consequently, a distinct research gap exists regarding how low-literacy or field-operational workers in mobile, high-risk service environments—such as hospital cleaning crews—navigate the dual pressures of instant operational responsiveness and digital strain.

To address these theoretical and practical gaps, this study complements McLuhan's media framework with Boundary Theory (Clark, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996) and the Stressor-Strain-Outcome perspective (Kasim et al., 2022). This multi-theoretical approach provides a nuanced lens to investigate how instant messaging shapes operational speed while simultaneously affecting worker well-being and professional standards. Based on this background, the study aims to accomplish three main objectives at the RS Bhayangkara project site: first, to analyze the specific forms of WhatsApp utilization in vertical, horizontal, and cross-divisional coordination; second, to identify the technical and non-technical obstacles affecting communication effectiveness; and third, to evaluate how digital interactions reconfigure work culture, professional boundaries, and organizational governance. Ultimately, this research provides empirical justification for establishing clear WhatsApp Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), digital communication ethics training, and formal archiving systems so that the benefits of instant communication are retained without compromising professionalism, data confidentiality, or employee well-being (Farivar et al., 2022; Kasim et al., 2022; Mudara & Willie, 2024).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative interpretive approach with an embedded single-case study design (Yin, 2018), operationally framed as an interactive case study to explore the communicative dynamics and shared experiences of field workers. Grounded in McLuhan's (1964) media theory alongside contemporary digital boundary frameworks (Clark, 2000; Kasim et al., 2022), the research investigated WhatsApp operational usage at PT Megah Resik Selaras. Fieldwork was conducted over three months from November 2024 to January 2025 at the RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai Polda Jambi project site, a high-stakes hospital environment where 12 cleaning service personnel rely heavily on mobile instant messaging for daily sanitation workflows.

Informants were selected through combined purposive and snowball sampling strategies based on three explicit criteria: (1) tenure exceeding one year, (2) active daily assignment at RS Bhayangkara, and (3) high WhatsApp usage intensity exceeding 20 work messages daily. The study involved five key informants comprising one Housekeeping Leader and four Cleaners, representing over 40% of the site's total workforce (Table 1). Data saturation was achieved by the fifth informant as no novel conceptual themes emerged during iterative interviews (Guest et al., 2006). To minimize selection bias from supervisor recommendations, candidates were independently cross-verified against shift attendance logs and assured of strict confidentiality.

Data collection utilized a three-pronged qualitative protocol: semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant observation, and archival documentation. In-depth interviews (45–60 minutes per session) were conducted across 1–2 sessions per informant using audio recordings

and transcribed verbatim. Participant observation was conducted over six weeks using Spradley's mini-tour technique, where the researcher was granted ethical, read-only access as a passive observer in the official "WA CS RS Bhayangkara" group to monitor real-time interaction patterns. Additionally, over 150 anonymized chat screenshots, shift rosters, and work logs were compiled as documentation.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants

No	Name	Age	Gender	Position
1	Rosdiana	37	Female	Housekeeping Leader
2	Rizki Indra Saputra	27	Male	Cleaner
3	M. Budi Priyono	27	Male	Cleaner
4	M. Fauzan	21	Male	Cleaner
5	Rani	40	Female	Cleaner

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

Data analysis combined Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis with Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) interactive model involving continuous data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Initial codes were synthesized into core themes reflecting operational barriers, boundary management, and work culture reconfigurations. Methodological rigor and trustworthiness were established through source and method triangulation—cross-verifying interview accounts against WhatsApp chat artifacts and observation notes—supplemented by member-checking sessions to confirm the accuracy of translated participant quotes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thematic Matrix and Contextual Overview

The qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and chat documentation were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis integrated with Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) interactive model. Data processing across the five primary informants at the RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai Jambi project site yielded three core themes and seven corresponding sub-themes. Data saturation was systematically verified when recurring conceptual patterns emerged without generating new codes during the final interview rounds with field cleaners.

To ensure transparency and analytical rigor, Table 2 synthesizes the thematic empirical findings, linking each core theme to its empirical indicators, primary data sources, and verbatim illustrative evidence.

The thematic overview demonstrates that WhatsApp functions as a double-edged operational instrument within PT Megah Resik Selaras at the RS Bhayangkara project site. While its multimodal features (voice notes, media sharing, real-time messaging) significantly accelerate field coordination and bridge physical distances across hospital wards, the absence of formal governance creates structural friction. Informal communication habits frequently overlap with critical operational directives, triggering information overload and blurred work-life boundaries for field cleaning staff. This empirical matrix serves as the baseline for the detailed analytical discussion in the subsequent sub-sections.

Table 2. Qualitative Thematic Findings Matrix

Core Theme	Sub-theme	Empirical Indicators	Primary Sources	Verbatim Illustrative Evidence
1. Dynamic Channels & McLuhan's Cool Medium	1. Vertical & Hierarchical Coordination	Top-down directives, photo-based proof of work, mandatory acknowledgment ("Ready, ma'am"), shift handovers.	Rosdiana (Leader), Rizki (Cleaner), Rani (Cleaner)	"Every sterilization instruction for the ER or isolation ward must be posted in the group. Staff must immediately reply 'Ready' and post before-after photos." — Rosdiana
	2. Horizontal Peer Interaction & Informal Support	Swap-shift negotiations, emergency coverage, audio note explanations, informal jargon.	Budi (Cleaner), Fauzan (Cleaner), Rizki (Cleaner)	"If an area isn't finished during shift handover, we video call or send a voice note. VNs are much easier than typing long texts." — Budi
2. Technical & Non-Technical Constraints	1. Digital Presenteeism & Boundary Blurring	Expectation of immediate response off-duty, message notifications at night, anxiety over unread tags.	Fauzan (Cleaner), Rani (Cleaner), Budi (Cleaner)	"Even on days off or at night, my heart races when the WA group pings. I want to ignore it, but I'm tagged by the supervisor." — Fauzan
	2. Information Overload & Message Burial	Critical emergency tasks buried under informal chatter, unread chat build-ups, missed cleaning protocols.	Rosdiana (Leader), Rizki (Cleaner)	"Instructions to clean body fluid spills in corridors often get buried under stickers and chatter. Consequently, response is delayed and we get complaints." — Rizki
3. Operational Governance & SOP Needs	1. Multimodal Feature Utilization	Strategic use of photo stamps, location pins, and voice notes for rapid accountability.	Rosdiana (Leader), Fauzan (Cleaner), Rani (Cleaner)	"Photos of hospital cleaning checklists must show time and location stamps. Text alone is not trusted by hospital management." — Rani
	2. Demand for Formal SOPs & Archiving	Lack of clear messaging guidelines, uncertainty on digital privacy, informal self-regulation practices.	All Informants (Rosdiana, Rizki, Budi, Fauzan, Rani)	"There must be clear rules on when the WA group can be used for instructions and when official written reports are required." — Rosdiana

Source: Qualitative Primary Data Analysis (2025)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

WhatsApp in Workplace Communication: Vertical, Horizontal, and Cross-Divisional Dynamics

The operationalization of WhatsApp within PT Megah Resik Selaras at the RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai project site illustrates how mobile instant messaging reconfigures traditional organizational channels into fluid, highly responsive interaction

networks. In vertical communication flows, WhatsApp serves as a real-time command-and-control mechanism between the Housekeeping Leader and field cleaners. Routine operational directives—such as urgent sanitization requests for emergency rooms, specialized isolation ward protocols, or immediate supervisor calls—are disseminated through the official group chat ("WA CS RS Bhayangkara"). Field workers are expected to provide rapid acknowledgment using standardized affirmative phrases like "*Siap, bu*" (Ready, Ma'am) followed by visual evidence of task completion. As Rosdiana, the Housekeeping Leader, explained:

"Setiap instruksi sterilisasi ruang IGD atau isolasi wajib saya kirim ke grup. Anggota harus langsung balas 'Siap' dan kirim foto before-after. Rumah sakit ini kan tempat vital, jadi saya butuh kepastian cepat bahwa area itu sudah di-handle."

(Every sterilization instruction for the emergency room or isolation ward must be posted in the group chat. Team members must immediately reply 'Ready' and send before-and-after photos. This hospital is a critical facility, so I need immediate confirmation that the area has been addressed.)

This top-down structure enforces immediate accountability and reduces the lag time associated with physical inspection tours across multi-story hospital wings. From the perspective of field staff, this pattern establishes clear operational priorities while embedding digital monitoring into daily cleaning routines. Rizki Indra Saputra, a field cleaner, noted that vertical communication requires constant vigilance: "*Begitu grup WA berbunyi dan ada tag dari Bu Rosdiana, kita tidak bisa menunda. Harus langsung baca dan respon, apalagi kalau menyangkut komplain dari perawat RS.*" (As soon as the WA group pings and there is a tag from Mrs. Rosdiana, we cannot delay. We must read and respond immediately, especially if it involves complaints from hospital nurses.) These findings align with recent empirical studies demonstrating that instant messaging enhances vertical information flow, reduces reporting delays, and strengthens supervisor control in field operations (Farzana et al., 2024; Abdelhay et al., 2024; Neiroukh et al., 2024).

Simultaneously, horizontal communication among field cleaners thrives as a peer-to-peer support system that compensates for the rigidity of formal reporting. Cleaners frequently utilize horizontal WhatsApp channels—both through direct messaging and informal peer subgroups—to negotiate shift swaps, request physical assistance for heavy equipment relocation, and conduct seamless shift handovers (*operan shift*). To overcome the constraints of typing detailed text while wearing protective rubber gloves or handling sanitation equipment, workers heavily rely on audio features. Budi Priyono highlighted the efficiency of voice notes in horizontal coordination:

"Kalau ada area koridor atau kamar pasien yang belum beres pas mau operan shift, kita VC atau kirim VN biar cepat. Lebih enak pakai VN daripada ngetik panjang-panjang, tangan kita kan sering basah atau pakai sarung tangan. Kawan langsung paham maksudnya."

(If an area like a corridor or patient room isn't finished during shift handover, we video call or send a voice note to speed things up. Using voice notes is much better than typing long texts, especially since our hands are often wet or gloved. My colleagues understand the context immediately.)

This horizontal peer-interaction network fosters collective problem-solving and operational resilience in high-mobility environments, supporting earlier findings by Jabbar et al. (2020) and Ulhaq et al. (2026) regarding the utility of instant messaging in maintaining informal organizational cohesion.

The empirical dynamics observed at RS Bhayangkara provide strong qualitative support for Marshall McLuhan's (1964) media theory, specifically his aphorism that *"the medium is the message"* and his classification of media structures. In McLuhan's typology, WhatsApp functions as an exemplary interactive "cool medium"—a channel characterized by low sensory definition and high participant involvement (McLuhan, 1964). Unlike formal written memos or emails that deliver high-definition, fully structured information requiring minimal context reconstruction, WhatsApp messages in this field context consist primarily of truncated text, informal shorthand, location pins, and brief voice notes. Consequently, field cleaners must actively engage their cognitive and contextual knowledge to interpret directives, decipher shift contexts, and execute complex sanitation tasks.

Furthermore, as recent media scholars emphasize, the choice of a mobile medium fundamentally alters the scale, tempo, and pattern of human interaction rather than simply conveying raw content (Biondi, 2025). By embedding work coordination within a personal, always-connected mobile application, PT Megah Resik Selaras has transformed its workplace culture into one defined by hyper-responsiveness, informality, and continuous digital availability (Huang & Zhang, 2019; Mols & Pridmore, 2020). While this transition maximizes operational agility in managing hospital sanitation routines, it simultaneously imposes structural expectations that blur formal administrative boundaries, setting the stage for technical and psychological friction among field staff.

Technical and Non-Technical Constraints: Technostress, Boundary Blurring, and Information Overload

While the adoption of WhatsApp enhances field responsiveness, empirical evidence from the RS Bhayangkara project site reveals significant non-technical constraints, particularly regarding work-life boundary blurring and digital presenteeism. The persistent influx of work notifications outside formal shift hours creates an implicit expectation of continuous digital availability. Field cleaners reported heightened psychological anxiety whenever group notifications sounded during off-duty hours or personal rest periods. Grounded in Boundary Theory (Clark, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996), the distinction between the "work domain" and "home domain" becomes severely compromised as the mobile device serves simultaneously as a personal and professional medium. M. Fauzan, a field cleaner, detailed this psychological intrusion:

"Meskipun lagi libur atau malam hari, kalau HP bunyi dari grup WA rasanya deg-degan. Mau ga dibalas tapi di-tag sama pengawas. Kalau lambat respon, besoknya disindir atau dianggap tidak bertanggung jawab."

(Even on days off or at night, my heart races whenever the WA group notification pings. I want to ignore it, but I get tagged by the supervisor. If I respond slowly, I get criticized the next day or viewed as irresponsible.)

This sentiment was echoed by Rani, who highlighted how digital encroachment affects personal domestic routines: *"Kadang kita lagi sama keluarga di rumah, tiba-tiba ada instruksi lembur atau komplain ruangan dari perawat. Jadi susah mau istirahat tenang karena pikiran tertuju ke HP terus."* (Sometimes while at home with family, sudden overtime instructions or room complaints from nurses come in. It becomes difficult to rest peacefully because my mind is constantly attached to my phone.) These field observations corroborate recent empirical studies by Mols and Pridmore (2020), Farivar et al. (2022), and He (2025), which argue that unmanaged instant messaging channels foster invasive digital intrusions, forcing employees to construct self-regulated boundary strategies to preserve personal well-being.

In addition to boundary blurring, technical and operational friction arises from information overload and message burial within unstructured chat threads. Because the official WhatsApp group is utilized simultaneously for critical operational commands, routine shift updates, informal banter, and media submissions, vital emergency instructions frequently become obscured under high message volumes. In a high-risk hospital setting where immediate sanitization of infectious fluids or emergency room turnover is paramount, communication delays directly compromise operational quality. Rizki Indra Saputra recounted a specific operational failure caused by message burial:

"Sering pesan instruksi pembersihan cairan tubuh di koridor atau darah di IGD tertimbun stiker sama obrolan kawan-kawan. Kita ga kelihatan karena chat-nya numpuk ratusan. Akhirnya penanganan lambat dan supervisor kena komplain dari pihak manajemen rumah sakit."

(Instructions to clean body fluid spills in corridors or blood in the ER often get buried under stickers and colleague chatter. We miss them because hundreds of messages pile up. Consequently, sanitization response is delayed and the supervisor receives complaints from hospital management.)

From an information systems perspective, this phenomenon illustrates classic information overload, where human information-processing capacities are overwhelmed by the volume and unorganized velocity of incoming digital inputs (Eppler & Mengis, 2004; Yang & Feng, 2024). When urgent directives share the exact same interface as casual social interactions, message salience diminishes, creating operational vulnerabilities in service delivery (Hurbean et al., 2022).

Synthesizing these empirical friction points through the Stressor-Strain-Outcome theoretical framework (Kasim et al., 2022), the unguided reliance on WhatsApp imposes substantial psychological strain (*technostress*) on low-literacy operational workers. Field staff experience role overload and digital fatigue due to the constant pressure of visibility, engagement, and immediate response expectations (Huang & Zhang, 2019). While McLuhan (1964) conceptualized "cool media" as inviting and participatory, the lack of organizational boundaries transforms this high-participation medium into a source of continuous cognitive burden. Without structured messaging protocols or formal archiving systems, the benefits of instant connectivity are routinely undermined by operational miscommunication, data loss, and

diminished worker well-being (Farivar et al., 2022; Kasim et al., 2022; Mudara & Willie, 2024).

Utilization of WhatsApp Features for Field Reporting and Governance

The field operational routines at RS Bhayangkara reveal that WhatsApp's multimodal features—specifically photo media sharing, voice notes, and location tags—are strategically leveraged to establish visual accountability and bridge literacy barriers among field cleaning staff. In a high-risk hospital environment, verbal or written text alone is frequently deemed insufficient by management to verify that specialized sanitation protocols (such as disinfection in emergency wards or waste removal in isolation units) have been executed properly. Consequently, field cleaners utilize smartphone cameras to capture "before-and-after" cleaning conditions, often combining them with third-party time-and-location stamp applications before posting them into the operational group. Rani, a field cleaner, explained the necessity of visual reporting:

"Foto ceklis kebersihan area rumah sakit harus kelihatan jam dan lokasinya. Kalau cuma tulisan di WA, manajemen RS tidak percaya. Jadi kami foto kondisi ruangan sebelum disapu dan sesudah di-pel, lalu di-share ke grup sebagai bukti kerja."

(Photos of hospital cleaning checklists must show time and location stamps. Text messages alone in WhatsApp are not trusted by hospital management. Therefore, we take photos of room conditions before sweeping and after mopping, then share them in the group as proof of work.)

This reliance on visual and auditory modalities transforms WhatsApp into a dynamic reporting tool that bypasses traditional paper-based checklists. As Rosdiana, the Housekeeping Leader, noted, photo verification provides instant remote monitoring capabilities across physically dispersed hospital zones. Furthermore, for low-literacy staff or workers operating under time-sensitive physical demands, voice notes offer a low-friction alternative to text composition, ensuring that urgent operational updates are transmitted rapidly without interrupting active cleaning duties.

However, despite these functional advantages, the current operational model reveals a critical governance gap characterized by the absence of formal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and official archiving protocols. Because WhatsApp functions as an ephemeral, unstructured communication platform, historical operational data—such as past sanitation logs, shift handover records, and equipment maintenance requests—are easily lost within continuous chat streams. Furthermore, sharing operational photos in an unmanaged instant messaging environment raises significant data confidentiality and privacy concerns, particularly within a medical facility where patient privacy or sensitive hospital areas might inadvertently be captured on camera. Rosdiana highlighted the pressing need for organizational governance:

"Harus ada aturan jelas kapan grup WA boleh dipakai kirim instruksi dan kapan harus pakai laporan tertulis resmi. Kalau semua campur di WA, data lama hilang dan kami susah membuktikan kerjaan kalau ada audit dari manajemen pusat atau rumah sakit."

(There must be clear rules regarding when the WA group can be used for directives and when official written reports are required. If everything is mixed in WA, historical data gets lost and it becomes difficult to prove our work during audits by central management or hospital authorities.)

The empirical findings at RS Bhayangkara demonstrate that while WhatsApp's multimodal features provide immediate operational agility, relying exclusively on informal instant messaging without administrative governance exposes the organization to operational and legal risks. As argued by Abdelhay et al. (2024) and Jabbar et al. (2020), instant messaging platforms are highly effective for rapid coordination but are structurally unsuited to serve as primary archival systems or formal compliance repositories.

To resolve these organizational vulnerabilities, PT Megah Resik Selaras must implement a dual-governance strategy. First, the company should establish formal WhatsApp SOPs that define explicit communication windows for non-emergency tasks, delineate acceptable messaging formats, and introduce digital ethics guidelines to respect employee off-duty hours (Farivar et al., 2022; Mudara & Willie, 2024). Second, critical operational records—such as daily sanitization checklists and incident reports—should be systematically migrated from transient WhatsApp threads into structured digital archiving systems or formal cloud-based documentation databases (Kasim et al., 2022; Ulhaq et al., 2026). By establishing clear boundaries between instant field messaging and formal administrative archiving, the organization can preserve the speed and accessibility of WhatsApp while maintaining professional standards, data security, and employee well-being.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that WhatsApp functions as a critical yet double-edged digital infrastructure for daily workflow coordination among field cleaning staff at PT Megah Resik Selaras within the RS Bhayangkara Mayang Mangurai Jambi project site. Grounded in Marshall McLuhan's media framework, WhatsApp operates as an interactive "cool medium" that leverages multimodal features—such as time-stamped photo verifications and voice notes—to accelerate top-down command execution, bridge literacy barriers, and enable flexible horizontal shift handovers across physically dispersed hospital wards. However, the unmanaged reliance on instant messaging introduces substantial organizational and psychological friction. In the absence of formal digital governance, continuous work notifications trigger work-life boundary blurring, digital presenteeism, and technostress among field operational staff, while unstructured group chatter frequently leads to information overload, causing critical emergency sanitization directives to become buried and delayed.

Despite these comprehensive empirical insights, this study acknowledges methodological limitations, primarily its reliance on a qualitative embedded single-case study design focused on a single hospital project site with five primary informants. Although data saturation was systematically achieved and sample representativeness exceeded 40% of the site's workforce, the qualitative findings may not be fully generalizable to non-healthcare cleaning sectors or different corporate environments. To address these operational vulnerabilities, PT Megah Resik Selaras management must establish formal WhatsApp Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that delineate clear communication windows for non-emergency tasks, enforce digital ethics guidelines to respect employee off-duty hours, and integrate structured archiving platforms to separate transient messaging from official audit records. Future research should expand this inquiry by employing quantitative or mixed-method designs across multi-site facilities to evaluate the longitudinal effects of digital governance on field worker retention, operational compliance, and psychological well-being.

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