

Down the Rabbit Hole: Interrogating Content Regulation of YouTube Kids Indonesia

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Abstract

Introduction: Given the rapid development of the digital media industry, it is essential to recognise the importance of YouTube, a widely used platform. In 2015, YouTube launched YouTube Kids, a platform designed specifically for children to provide content appropriate for young audiences.

Methods: This research uses a qualitative method by focusing on YouTube channels with children as the leading content creators, namely on @leikagarudita accounts, @AishwaNahlaOfficial, @abilfatankey, and @ArinagaFamily with the theme of family and children. This study examines how the development of YouTube channels for children can provide space and new alternatives for a variety of content for adults on the YouTube platform and the content regulations governing their use. Based on the restriction rules given by YouTube Parental Control. What are the dynamics that arise in the use of YouTube Kids?

Findings: The study revealed that content restrictions on YouTube Kids primarily target viewers under 13, based on information collection patterns on the YouTube Kids search page and Parental Access and Controls. Children are not given full access to account management at each stage, but parents or guardians have full authority over the YouTube Kids Company. The rules for using YouTube Kids are closely related to parental permission, aiming to provide content suitable for children.

Originality: Although several studies have discussed the content of YouTube channels. However, no research has focused on family channel YouTube accounts focusing on children as the leading content creators.

Keywords: YouTube Kids, Content Regulation, Parental Control.

Introduction

According to UNICEF data, in 2023, one child becomes a new internet user every second, with 175,000 new children yearly (Kominfo, 2023). Nezar Patria, Deputy Minister of Communication and Informatics of the Republic of Indonesia, stated that 30 million children in Indonesia have used the internet. These children are 5-11 years old, so those in Kindergarten and Elementary School education are familiar with the internet. The use of online media in children has become unavoidable since Covid-19 passed. Currently, most schools use online media as a means of modern learning. However, the impact is also inevitable. Various countries also have to deal with online addiction; parents must be able to cooperate in overcoming this and be able to communicate with their children regarding behaviour changes openly. (Alwaely et al., 2023; Lee & Kim, 2017). There are different behavioural changes if the child has been exposed to online media. Changes in psychology, behaviour, and health can indicate this (Baysak et al., 2016; Jin Jeong et al., 2020; Ohno, 2016).

In this study, a qualitative descriptive approach is used. (Hesse et al., 2019; Snelson, 2016). A subjective and in-depth understanding is needed to see the content dynamics on the YouTube Kids platform. Qualitative research has the advantage of

looking at each phenomenon specifically and freely in the context of (Hettche et al., 2023; Sui et al., 2022).

Media-friendly children cannot be released through media development in the modern era. Media-friendly children (child-friendly media) can appear when the media and system are capable of working directly as well as giving the ideal space for children, okay as a producer where it is involved in making the content, as well as consumers, where the media content is worthy for watched children following the growth of the flower (Jempson, 1999). As stated in the United Nations (UN) on Children's Rights, four fundamental rights must be fulfilled: the Right to Survival, the Right to Protection, the Right to Growth and Development, and the Right to Participate (UNICEF, 1989). Relevant to Protection Rights and Participation Rights, where children feel safe and obtain positive content impressions from media exposure. Where the trend is developing Child No Again as an audience, but they join actively in producing content (de La Laguna et al., n.d.; Franqueira et al., 2022; Salsabilla et al., 2023; Saraswati Sakariah et al., 2022; Simanjuntak et al., 2023). According to the Constitution on Child Protection No. 23 of 2002, Article 1 Paragraph 1, children are someone who is not 18 years old. Still, children are content, and according to the World Health Organization (WHO), children are aged 0-19 years (Kemenkes, 2011).

In 2023, the number of Internet users accessing the information on a child ages 5-18 years was 26.67 per cent, namely around 7.35 million individuals (Nurhanisah, 2023). These data have experienced a decline amounting to 2 per cent compared to the previous year, namely 28.67 per cent. These data will continue to grow along with the many generations born as digital natives, born in the digital era. Later, those who are this occupy age children. When Indonesia is Golden in 2045, the momentum of Indonesia's 1st century will become age-productive, so it is undeniable that media exposure will influence the growth of flower children. Recall that media exposure influences children's information and knowledge.

YouTube, on its journey, has quite a unique dynamic. It started as a place to upload videos and can be watched by the wider community. It has extraordinary interaction power and a very high social effect (Neumann & Herodotou, 2020; Pires et al., 2021). Also, every circle, especially children, needs to pay special attention to the impact of use and the quality of their content on available online platforms (Jaakkola, 2020a; Keryova, 2020; Martin et al., 2021).

YouTube is an online platform that originated in California, United States, in 2005. He keeps growing fine from features and interactions with his audience. YouTube has become the largest platform for uploading information. In 2015, YouTube Kids created content for children under 14. Several studies have discussed the development of YouTube Kids among children. YouTube Kids can become a description of parenting children in the family via research on the "Kimono Mom" Channel, which presents Japanese mothers' parenting style named Moe to his son Sutan (Sakariah et al., 2022). The results found that the parenting method is positive and trending and has become a visiting content for Internet users. The data showed high engagement in content-positive parenting styles in children through YouTube channels (Chairunnisa & Talib, 2023; Hussain et al., 2022; Lange, 2014; Putri et al., 2022; Salsabilla et al., 2023). There is also quantitative research on observing children's behaviour while watching YouTube Kids, where children's behaviour has positive trends not only in media spectacles but also in the influence of environmental and social factors (Salsabilla et al., 2023; Simanjuntak et al., 2023). This shows that the child still required supervision and

instruction from the parents. It is undeniable that the content on YouTube is dynamic and continuous.

YouTube Kids experience fluctuating developments in their country of origin, namely, America. We need to realise that YouTube Kids is staying away from the private platform to obtain profit for the owner of the platform. In 2006, Google bought YouTube and said that anybody could upload content without feeling afraid of being supervised by broadcasting companies in America. Therefore, the presence of neither YouTube Kids is free from an interest economy from the mega-technology company Google Inc. Based on data from the United States Federal Trade Commission, Google and YouTube were fined USD 170 million. This is suspected to be due to the child privacy law's conjecture violation due to the use of personal data without the parent's permission (FTC, 2019). Indonesia also has an independent body named the Commission of Indonesian Broadcasting (KPI) supervising media broadcasting. Arranging in Constitution Broadcasting Number 32 of 2022, the KPI's task is ensuring Indonesians obtain appropriate and correct information from the Human Rights Man (Ahmad Efendi, 2021). The KPI's last case was a reprimand of IPOP impressions involving wild animal children (RG, 2021). The KPI carries this out because worries will be a harmful stimulant for audiences who are also children.

Related to quality media broadcasts on YouTube, 'Elsagate' appears, which is a phenomenon that YouTube videos show using Child Characters and is associated with scenes that are disgusting, adult, violent, or vulgar (Bridle, 2017). Phenomenon Elsagate This Enough disturbing parents and guardians children because of limitations of guardians' supervision for 24 hours to kids, making 'Elsagate' style videos like that Lots of interest proven from its height kind of video production (Ishikawa et al., 2019). The presence of these videos, although including negative impressions, will, but cannot immediately be lost on YouTube. Proven. Still widespread and precisely becoming a separate room economy for the unscrupulous creators of Elsagate videos. James Bridle explained on TEDx that these videos also produce advertising results (Bridle, 2018). Media algorithms also work on YouTube Kids, so activity becomes unended If No parents are accompanied (Swastiningrum, 2022).

Providing the correct and age-appropriate content can affect good growth and development for children (Choi & Kim, 2024). Algorithms are one of the main determinants in creating a good broadcast content ecosystem for children (Balanzategui, 2023). Data obtained from the support.google.com page explains that policy YouTube Kids are designed for audiences in three age categories: preschool (less than four years), younger (to 5-8 years), and older (to 9-12 years). Arrangement content-related content: sexual, violence, weapons, dangerous content, language, diet, fitness and beauty, topic sensitivity, and music videos. Essentially, the content impressions of YouTube Kids are allowed to give the content paid. However, if traditional advertising for products and services uploaded by creators or brands is forbidden, content that directly pushes viewers to buy something product, video focuses on packaging Products, and Videos concentrate on the accumulation or consumption of products in an excessive manner (Google, 2023).

This study examines the development of media regulations on YouTube Kids in Indonesia. Then, how? Role deep media producers positioning children in producing content as part of the public in matter Here, YouTube Kids. According to Yanuar Nugroho, it is essential to know the extent to which the existence and development of internal media positions the public (Nugroho et al., 2012). This is related to media

responsibility as pillar four, where they are responsible for providing educational and relevant shows to the needs of the public.

Methods

This research uses qualitative description by observing content impressions on family YouTube channel accounts that make children the leading content creators. The selection of YouTube Channel Accounts is taken and processed from Socialblade.com as of December 22, 2024, with specifications on content about children. It was found that the top four channels with the highest followers focused on family and child content and were the leading content creators for each of their content impressions.

The primary data processing in this study was data in the form of various content views, interactions, and features on the YouTube Channel. The data was processed using YouTube because the opinions on YouTube Kids were limited to children's content. Four YouTube channels were also taken, and they appeared on YouTube Kids. The data was processed and analysed qualitatively by looking at the dynamics of parental guidance and content display on these accounts.

Table 1. Family YouTube Channel Account

No	Account	Followers	Content Video	Joined YouTube
1.	@leikagarudita	14,8 M	2,4 K	3 January 2019
2.	@AishwaNahlaOfficial	14 M	398	15 May 2019
3.	@abilfatankey	10,6 M	3,8 K	4 April 2015
4.	@ArinagaFamily	6,35 M	4 K	31 December 2017

Note: Four YouTube channels were taken, and they appeared on YouTube Kids.

Results

This study examines YouTube Channel accounts that use family as their primary content and make children in the family members the main actors. These YouTube accounts also appear on the YouTube Kids platform. Still, due to the limitations of the features, the YouTube platform needs help analysing the content, such as the number of followers, likes, comments, and categorisation of videos uploaded to the channel.



Figure 1. YouTube Channel accounts from Left to Right (source: YT Account @leikagarudita, @AishwaNahlaOfficial, @abilfatankey, @ArinagaFamily)

The @leikagarudita account shows a family involved in content creation, with Leika Garudita Hidayat as the leading actor and its signature. Since the age of 4, namely, as of 2019, when the account was born, Leika has been the leading actor in every content creation until she was 9. There is a compilation of 92 daily vlog videos of Leika and her family, Leika Review & Unboxing, and other daily activities. Approximately 2,506 videos have been produced, both videos, shorts, and live. With a total of 11 billion watched and has its management. Meanwhile, the @abilfatankey account came from three brothers' names: Abil, Fatana, and Key. The content is more in short videos or "Shorts," and their parents initially make the content specifically as

documentation of the child's growth so that later, they will be watched again (Kendariinfo, 2022).

Unlike the previous two accounts, @AishwaNahlaOfficial and @ArinagaFamily have different specialities. They focus on family-based music production by rearranging and creating your songs. In the @AishwaNahlaOfficial account, Aishwa Nahla is the first child of 4 siblings. His fame began when he was on video praying at the Singapore MRT at the age of 3 (Tribunnews, 2017). Since then, her fame has skyrocketed until she was invited by one of the famous YouTubers, namely Ria Ricis. Meanwhile, on the @ArinagaFamily account, it comes from the names of his parents, namely Mr. Ari and Mrs. Aga, with his three children, namely Bama, Ruby, and Beryl. This family consistently produces educational songs for children, such as “*Tarian Kucing*,” “*Drama Pinjem Hape*,” “*Jangan Buang Sampah Sembarangan*,” and other children's songs. This account received the Anugerah Music Indonesia (AMI) Awards 2024 in the Best Abak-Anak Duo/Group/Collaboration category on the song “*Tarian Bebek*.”



Figure 2. YouTube Channel accounts from Left to Right (source : YT Account @leikagarudita, @AishwaNahlaOfficial, @abilfatankey, @ArinagaFamily)

As a distinctive feature, in each of these accounts, children are the main content in each production of their shows. As in the first left image, @leikagarudita tells the story as if he were a baby for 24 hours. With the title "24 Hours of Leika Becomes a Baby, Father, and Mother Confusion!" the show reached 50 million views. The duration of the 12-minute video is quite attractive to the audience and features "Tompel" as a Comic Relief character (a character who plays the role of an emotional stretcher, laughing material, and entertainment interrupter) in each content. Leika is described as a child with many entertaining abilities, from acting, singing, dancing, and playing games. These are created for different accounts, namely @LeikaGaming, with 1.63 million followers and 1,677 videos uploaded.



Figure 3. YouTube Channel accounts from Left to Right (source: YT Account @leikagarudita, @AishwaNahlaOfficial, @abilfatankey, @ArinagaFamily)

On the @abilfatankey account, the three brothers also produce content with characters that change to create entertainment videos with short stories. The display of picture number two from the left shows a boy wearing a long wig with two pigtailed. The boy tells the story of an adult woman with a low economy and facing a socialite woman with expensive goods, with another boy also playing. More short stories are produced

on this account by carrying contemporary comedy stories and displaying silliness and entertainment.

Meanwhile, @AishwaNahlaOfficial and @ArinagaFamily do not produce content with characters that are different from their original characters. Their videos are more about Music Videos and behind-the-scenes shows about the music production process. The main characteristics of these two accounts are the music and the production process, as well as family life with Islamic nuances in their environment.

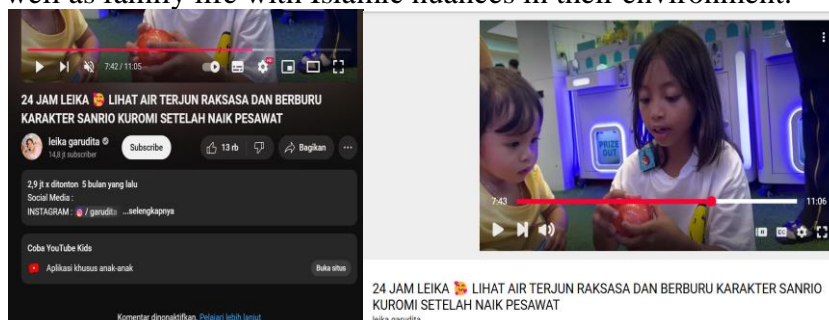


Figure 4. Same video content, left for YouTube platform view and right for YouTube Kids platform view (source: YT Account @leikagarudita)

Figure 4 shows the YouTube and YouTube Kids platform impressions for the same content. By taking one of the @leikagarudita videos titled "24 Hours of Leika, see a giant waterfall and hunt for the character Sanrio Kuromi after boarding a plane." On the YouTube platform, the comment column is automatically disabled. When uploading content, select the "made for kids" feature so that the feature appears as content for children by still displaying the number of likes and dislikes. It differs from the appearance of the YouTube Kids platform, which does not display either the comment column or the number of likes and dislikes. There are no features for various viewers or for interacting directly with other viewers and the creator.

Through the results of the above research, displaying the content impressions of each account has its main characteristics with a high number of views. In this study, content viewed through the YouTube Platform is registered or appears on the YouTube Kids platform. Not all videos with nuances about children will immediately appear on YouTube Kids. Still, those who choose features specifically for children can attract algorithms on YouTube that have been adjusted to the needs of their age.

Discussion

Regarding the development of YouTube studies on children, there have been a lot, especially regarding the impact and interaction between parents and children (Azer et al., 2018; C. M. Cunningham, 2014; Drotner, 2020; Jaakkola, 2020b; Martínez & Olsson, 2019). However, there is still no specific research on the scope in Indonesia that then discusses in more detail the variety of content produced by YouTube Accounts with one family as part of the content creator and children as the leading talent. So, this study restricts the four YouTube accounts mentioned earlier. Thus, the discussion in this study is limited to the results of the four accounts.

The results of this study can be used to discuss several topics: the culture of participation, the protection of children's privacy, and consumer media in children. The YouTube Kids Platform provides a vast space for children to participate. Especially children who are supported by their families. So that children get adequate facilities, ethical limits that can be monitored, and more intense management because they are under the guardianship of their parents, the culture of participation allows for active

involvement by children as their leading talent (Wendland, 2024). Making videos on YouTube is a culture of involvement that can increase the togetherness and cohesiveness of a family, and it can be an opportunity for families committed to producing video content to be uploaded to the YouTube Kids platform. One of the requirements to be able to enter the YouTube Kids algorithm is to consistently upload videos regularly and meet child protection rules under the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) regulation, where content and advertising are intended according to the eligibility of children and the security of children's data is the main thing to be protected.

Participatory culture, as a concept, is in danger of losing any real meaning because participation has become a key strategy and buzzword widely used across the media and cultural industries, as well as in the scholarly field (Ihlebak, 2018). Regarding the direction of this cultural development, children have layered protection compared to adults, as stated in Law No. 27 of 2022 concerning Personal Data Protection, where parents have a complete obligation to maintain children's privacy data and provide flexibility whether or not information related to them is willing to be disseminated. In this context, children are free to choose whether to be willing to be shown to the public. European countries and the United States have their protection regulations regulating the culture of digital participation to the extent that children's data can be consumed publicly (Macenaite & Kosta, 2017; Zimmerle & Wall, 2019).

For example, the @leikagarudita account has explicitly 92 videos that focus on Leika's daily vlogs, with a duration of 1 hour for each video. This must get special attention from his parents so as not to display his data indirectly in the video, such as a home address, date of birth, the name of the biological mother, and place of school, where this personal data needs to be kept confidential so that it does not become public consumption. There is a unique thing in one of the show programs that is made semi-sketched on the @leikagarudita account, namely the appearance of Tompel's figure as a comic relief. Furthermore, this children's content understands very well that comic relief characters can attract audience fans more strongly because they can break down boredom and increase attention to the main content (Kaye & Johnson, 2016).

Meanwhile, the account @abilfatankey has several 10.6 million subscribers. Although the lowest number of subscribers between the previous two will be the amount produced, most videos are 3.8 thousand videos. The most popular videos that touch the figure are 170 million; the other videos have an average audience size of 40 million. This channel account, which is more popular on YouTube Shorts content, can only be accessed on ordinary YouTube with an average number of viewers of 50-100 million times. On this channel, more lots make content funny, following trends in roleplay entertainment played by children aged teenagers 9-13 years old until pre-adulthood. In production, the show is more dominant in content with the nuances of 'short comedy skits.' Comedy skits are a marketing strategy for broadcasting @abilfatankey accounts. By telling daily activities, such as the interaction of complex housing mothers gossiping by inserting light comedies. This is played by a boy dressed in a mother's outfit, using a hair wig, a sleeve bag, and a dress. Comedy skits can be a strong alternative in increasing the number of audiences (Idowu & Ogunnubi, 2023).

There is a shift in the behaviour of the current information society, where the audience is not only a spectator or a consumer of information. However, they are also part of content production, later called prosumer (du Plessis, 2019; Mateus, 2021; Ross, 2014). As children are the leading talent of YouTubers, it has become common for

children to be the audience and creators. This is an opportunity for the audience to intervene in the quality of program shows so that they are no longer passive only in watching but can also intervene in creating content, trends, and markets (S. Cunningham & Craig, 2019; Lim & Nekmat, 2008)

The videos on the @ArinagaFamily account are unique, with more creating songs based on their daily lives and using simple and easy-to-understand lyrics for children and families. The prosumer that occurs here is a good opportunity to create quality content suitable for children's viewing, even though this content is not tied to a media company, which then has to rely on ratings with a single calculation (Kien, 2013; Zhang, 2017). Having the same character, the @AishwaNahlaOfficial account features more prayer music sung by 3 Nahla, namely the younger siblings of Aishwa Nahla. By rearranging songs and even creating songs to be broadcasted and enjoyed by children according to age. More video interludes depict Islam's daily life and their families' simplicity.

Ultimately, creating an ecosystem of YouTube views that is appropriate and relevant to children is necessary. Children can choose freely and master the algorithm well (Burroughs, 2017; O'Connor et al., 2023). YouTube can be latent for the younger generation. However, on the other hand, YouTube can also be an opportunity to create healthy market competition by strengthening the display of sound and age-relevant content (Hassinger-Das & Dore, 2023; Nansen & Balanzategui, 2022; Ribes, 2020).

Conclusion

Based on these results, the development of YouTube Kids is dynamic. Every country has a unique child in charge of quality impressions on the Internet. Regulated regulations in the Policy Guidance for YouTube Kids are still not sufficient to stem the current production of video content that is not friendly, like ElsaGate. Therefore, it is necessary to review and monitor regularly and comprehensively the parties involved, whoever owns it—interests harmed if YouTube Kids does not guard the balanced quality of the content, such as parents and teachers. Three were also found on YouTube channels, each with its characteristics. YouTube Kids Channel is still a tiny part of other channel accounts, with diverse content displayed to Indonesian children. For the following research, we hope that the exposure of YouTube Kids Channel, which is suitable for children, will be more widespread. It does not stop until here that academics and media monitors still own tasks and other related things with friendly media monitoring children, namely, the Over-the-Top service, which also has a unique platform for children, such as Netflix Kids, Disney Hotstar Kids, and Vidio Kids. How far is the content displayed in the course based on the appropriateness of broadcast for age-grown flower children? Not yet finished with matter that, but also with time. This is popular and widespread among children on a very popular social media platform, TikTok. Social media This myself too—presenting a variety of polemic because though there is a TikTok Kids platform, often involving active prosumers in children. Expected study: This study can provide treasures and contribute knowledge about friendly media development for children in Indonesia. Therefore, in the future, the quality of media in Indonesia will improve the kind and friendliness of viewers aged 14 years to the bottom.

Conflict of Interest

The researcher declares no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organisations related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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