

# Designing Creative Visual Communication Media about New Normal Health Protocol through A Hybrid Service Learning Class

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## Abstract

Service learning has always become an important experience for the student to learn and implement their knowledge for society's needs. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Visual Communication Media class from Petra Christian University got an opportunity to collaborate with Gugah Nurani Indonesia (GNI) Foundation to support the government program, "Kampung Tangguh". The students were asked to design 5 sets of creative media to communicate Covid-19 health protocol for the inhabitants of 5 Sub-districts in Semampir District, Surabaya, Indonesia. However, in this situation and regulation was not possible for the class to do the service learning on full onsite. Therefore it was held in hybrid mode. This research used the qualitative method and applied the design thinking process. At the Empathize stage, the data was gathered onsite by interviewing the related parties and observing the real situation in Semampir District. After that, the stage of Define, Ideate, and Prototype were held fully online with the guidance of the lecturer and assistant through online meetings. The best five teams got a chance to present their idea to the GNI Foundation and the government representative of Semampir District. After getting the feedback and approval, the Test stage was implemented onsite to get the result and evaluation. For each sub-district, there is a set of media consisting of: interactive brochures, unconventional banners, floor games, tablecloths for the roadside stall, murals, T-shirts, jingle, and music video. The whole media was designed to be interactive, integrated, and appropriate to the characteristics of the Semampir people. This project was successful in raising the awareness of Semampir people to apply the new normal health protocol. Moreover, based on the student's reflection, they were satisfied with this learning experience. Therefore it is recommended to conduct a hybrid service learning by ascertaining which parts are effective online and which are onsite.

**Keywords:** hybrid service learning, creative media, visual communication design, design thinking, Semampir district

## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2020, the world was shocked by the Covid-19 case and warnings started to appear to carry out activities from home to prevent the spread of this virus. No exception in Indonesia, it also started to apply the same thing, and this affects all areas of activity, from work to the teaching and learning process. If previously many activities were carried out in full onsite, now it has begun to be implemented online or hybrid (onsite and online). In addition, the Indonesian government has also socialized the 3M policy (*Memakai masker*/wearing masks, *Menjaga jarak*/keeping a distance, and *Mencuci tangan*/washing hands) to all people to maintain health protocols (Prasada & Canon, 2021).

This 3M policy is very important and continues to be socialized to all levels of society. Likewise in the city of Surabaya, especially in the Semampir District, they also did the same thing. This District consists of 5 Sub-districts namely Ujung, Sidotopo, Ampel, Wonokusumo, and Pegirian. The government has tried to socialize health protocols, but there are still many people who don't do it (Yurianto, 2020). At that time there was also an institution called Gugah Nurani Indonesia (GNI) which was engaged in child protection. GNI itself has been working with the Semampir District for the past 10 years by making various efforts to improve the community's economy and community-based child protection in the Semampir District, Surabaya (Meito, 2021). Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, in collaboration with government programs through Kampung Tangguh, GNI planned a campaign for the community, particularly the Semampir District area in Surabaya to participate in the government health program through the health protocol campaign. At that time, GNI invited Petra Christian University (PCU), specifically the Visual Communication Design (VCD) Department to collaborate in making social campaign strategies to design creative and innovative media about the importance of health protocols.

This collaboration opportunity fits perfectly with one of the VCD PCU courses, namely Visual Communication Media. In this course, students learn about the various types and characteristics of design media and their application to real projects. By looking at the problems in the Semampir sub-district, this class is suitable for service learning. Through service learning activities, students can broaden their learning experiences by combining what they have learned in class with hands-on activities while maintaining a balance between learning objectives and the services provided (Schwartz, 2019).

However, because at that time the class could not be carried out fully on site, this was the first time hybrid service learning was being held, which needed some adjustments to the campus and the district policies. This service learning applies the design thinking method which the students have previously studied. In its implementation, some stages are implemented onsite and some are online. Therefore even though at this time Covid has subsided, that doesn't mean we have to return to the full onsite way of learning as before. However, if there is a more effective way of service learning through a combination of online and offline activities, it will certainly make learning activities and community services even better.

## **METHODS**

This research uses qualitative methods. This method is suitable for observing phenomena that occur in Semampir District, especially regarding the socialization of health protocols in this area. Indeed, policies related to health protocols have been disseminated to all regions in Indonesia, but this can also be interpreted in different ways according to the conditions of each region. Through this qualitative method, it can be suitable for studying the life of a community, their perspective, and how they interpret things (Yin, 2015). Therefore, in this project, students need to directly understand the problems that occur in the Semampir District, the daily life habits of the people, therefore the media designed by students in this project do not just make good visuals, but can really fit with the characteristics of local residents. This SL activity was attended by 188 students in 1 VCD PCU batch who were divided into 19 groups with the guidance of a lecturer assistant for each group. Due to the large number of participants and the conditions in the midst of a pandemic, the survey could only be conducted by limited representatives of lecturers and students. Primary data collection is done by interviews, observation, and documentation. This SL activity is included in the Hybrid Type III category according to Waldner et al., research (2012) because the class and practice are in a blended format, some parts are online and some are onsite. This service learning activity also applies the design thinking method which consists of 5 stages: Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test. The design thinking process is considered suitable in this case, as this process can help to understand human needs when facing a problem, narrow down problems, create various alternative ideas, and try to implement them through the prototype and test stages (Foster, 2021). Therefore in its application to this project, the steps are carried out as follows:

**1. Empathize:** This initial stage is very important in learning for students in order to understand the real conditions of the problems that occur in the Semampir District, get to know the characteristics of each resident in each of the 5 Sub-district involved, and also observe the environmental conditions where residents live. Therefore it is necessary to do observations and interviews with the 3 groups of main informants:

- The people of Semampir District, as the target audience for the design media that will be made, and also to see the real problems that occur in this community.
- The government, as the representative of the 5 Sub-districts in the Semampir District, understands the regulations and conditions of the community as a whole.
- Gugah Nurani Indonesia (GNI), as an institution that collaborates with campus to carry out social campaigns and create creative media.

At this stage, initial coordination was held through online meetings by getting to know the GNI, then scheduling to do direct research by going around the 5 Sub-districts in Semampir District to meet related parties.

**2. Define:** After doing observations and interviews, the next step is to analyze the root of the problem to find solutions and find the right form of creative media. At this stage the VCD students divided into small teams to do online discussion with the guidance of the lecturer assistance.

**3. Ideate:** Based on the root of the problem, the students create an idea for a social campaign along with a creative media strategy by considering the effectiveness of the media and costs. There was 1 big idea that was agreed upon in class, then it was implemented in 5 Sub-districts to suit the characteristics of each place and its people.

**4. Prototype:** Every creative idea is designed into the form of a design prototype to be presented to GNI and also the Semampir government. After they give the feedback, the students will revise and the final design will be printed.

**5. Test:** 5 selected groups have finalized media designs according to the feedback, then they are tested by applying each media to the community to get evaluation and further development in the future. At this stage the students learn to implement their design work to overcome real problems that occur in the society,

After this whole process is finished, the final step is reflection. This stage is the uniqueness and characteristics of service learning. Reflection in service learning links between academic material and community service experience or links between theory and practice (Syamsudduha & Tekeng, 2017). At this stage, students have the opportunity to think about and feel again about what they have learned, applied, both in the form of obstacles and benefits obtained through this SL activity.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In the Visual Communication Media class, the students are provided with the knowledge of types and characteristics of various media that are related to the visual communication design field, for example: posters, banners, videos, radio, to unconventional media. Then the service learning started from the Empathy Stage. We visited the Semampir District and conducted interviews, observations, and documentation in all 5 Sub-districts: Ujung, Sidotopo, Ampel, Wonokusumo and Pegirian. From this research, at the Defined Stage the VCD PCU team, GNI, and Semampir District agreed to decide on the need for a social campaign through a series of creative media to socialize health protocols to the people of Semampir District.

### ***Problem Analysis***

During the Covid-19 pandemic, implementing health protocols was quite difficult here because there is no distance between one house to another. The social life of the people who live in this district is very close, they consider the terraces and narrow roads as part of their living area. They only use masks when leaving the house to go out of the district area. Therefore everyone who is still around the house does not use the mask at all. Awareness about personal hygiene is also still low. It can be seen that many children play outside without wearing footwear, not wearing masks, and many more.

In general, from observations regarding the awareness of Covid-19 at Semampir District:

- Parents and children have often heard about Covid-19 and health protocols, but are still not really aware of the dangers or risks of Covid-19, and still tend to underestimate the health protocols.
- Some places already have hand washing facilities for the public.

- There have been lots of banners about wearing masks and how to wash hands, but they are neither attractive nor evocative (as seen from the attitude of the residents).
- Many Semampir people did not wear masks or wear it but did not cover their noses or even their mouths.
- Going around the house is still considered 'at home' therefore people don't wear masks.
- Not paying attention to the importance of keeping the distance.

Based on the findings above, this community service activities in the form of designing creative media related to health protocols for the Semampir District are very important. By collaborating with GNI, the VCD PCU team will create a series of media to re-awaken Semampir people of the importance of health protocols to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

### ***Purpose of Making Creative Media (Social Campaign)***

The purpose is to make Semampir people aware of the importance of health protocols in the new normal era. This campaign will be delivered using unique and interactive media to attract the attention of the residents without being patronizing.

### ***Target Audience***

Based on the research, the SL team has grouped the target audience (Semampir people) into two categories: primary and secondary target audience.

#### ***Primary Target Audience:***

Parents (male & female) aged 25-40 years, have children aged 3-12 years, low socioeconomic status, Occupation: employee, self-employed, laborer. Elementary – High School Education Level

#### **Psychographics:**

Patriarchal culture (one family follows the decision of the head of the family), men are more difficult to open to new insights, but women are more open-minded. They get along well with neighbors. They are not afraid of Covid-19 and just surrender to fate. Assuming that children's school activities are not the business of parents, they tend to let go of their hands on children's education/schooling.

#### **Behavior:**

Likes to socialize, gathering from afternoon to evening (for men in small traditional coffee shops/roadside stall, for women in front of the house), likes to share stories about various

problems and news (word of mouth is very fast), when traveling close around the area, they usually don't wear masks because they are considered to be in their own living environment.

***Secondary Target Audience:***

Children aged 3-12 years, low socioeconomic status.

**Psychographics:**

Pays little attention to health protocols, misses going to school because they want to meet their friends, and online school is considered as 'holiday'.

**Behavior:**

Likes to play outside the house with friends, some are already active in participating in religious activities, for boys they like cycling, playing football and kites, some like to play online games together, girls like to hang out. They often go out without wearing masks and shoes and tend to sit anywhere (street/sidewalk).

From the results of the research and determination of the root causes at the Define Stage above, it is time to start the Ideate Stage. This Ideate Stage requires agreeing on 1 big idea which can cover all 5 Sub-districts, but also gives room for freedom for its implementation according to the characteristics of each Sub-districts. The following is the idea description:

***Communication Strategy***

The designed media will carry the theme M.A.I.N., in English, MAIN means 'main/important thing', while in Indonesian MAIN means 'playing', as well as the following health protocol abbreviation:

**M.A.I.N.:**

- **Maskeran** (wearing a mask)
- **Ambil Jarak** (keep your distance)
- **Ingat cuci tangan** (remember to wash your hands)
- **Nyaman semuanya** (everyone will feel comfortable)

This theme is suitable both for primary and secondary target audience, for example: MAIN (play) with friends, MAIN (play) outside the home, MAIN (hangout) at the local small shop/roadside stall, and so on.



Fig 1. The Strategy of Semampir M.A.I.N. Social Campaign

The students design interactive and integrated media with the following types of media:

- **Banners:** Each sub-district has many places to put up banners with a medium to large size. These new banners have unique illustrations and copywriting which are more related to Semampir people's daily life. Through this media, they can always be reminded to implement health protocols.
- **Floor Game (Paving Mural):** This media is especially aimed for children. There are various floor games made by adopting traditional games that are easy to understand, but include messages related to health protocols. While playing, children can also learn about this at the same time. This floor game is placed in a large area which is often passed by local children.
- **Tablecloth:** According to research results which show that residents of the Semampir District like gathering in roadside stalls, it shows that tablecloths are one of the media that can be read immediately when they spend time in this place. Apart from being attractively designed, there are many messages conveyed on this tablecloth, even while eating, the residents can still comply with health protocols, such as keeping their distance and also washing their hands.





Fig 2. Design Media for Wonokusumo Sub-district and Ampel Sub-district

- **Sticker:** This media consists of sticker series that can be pasted anywhere the people want. For example, it can be pasted on windows, vehicles, and other frequently used objects. In addition to the unique illustrations, the messages conveyed are also appropriate to the health protocol context.
- **Interactive Brochures:** These brochures are not just brochures that contain information, but can also be played, for example, there are quizzes, games, stickers, and some can even be hung on door handles. This brochure is not only to be looked at and then thrown away, but because it is interactive and unique, it can attract people to read, understand the message, and keep it.



Fig 3. Design Media for Pegirian Sub-district and Sidotopo Sub-district

- **T-shirts:** This media also has a message about health protocols but in a unique way, makes people want to wear them, and this message goes with them wherever they go.
- **Songs and Music Videos:** Jingle has always been a favorite and effective media for making people memorize the messages they want to convey. Through a simple song that tells about M.A.I.N., as well as the supporting illustrations, this song is easy listening and can be played anywhere from their smartphone.



Fig 4. Design Media for Ampel Sub-district and Ujung Sub-district

The Ideate and Prototype Stages are held online. The students assist concepts and ideas to the lecturer assistants through online meetings. At the Prototype Stage, the team has to consider the installation location or the application of the media, to make sure that the size is appropriate. From dozens of ideas made by the students, then the best 5 were chosen to represent each Sub-district: Ujung, Sidotopo, Wonokusumo, Ampel, and Pegirian. These ideas were presented to the GNI and Semampir District government (the district head and the sub-district head). The presentation was held online, because at that time the covid cases had not subsided. This online presentation is easier to understand because everyone can access or see it through their computer screens with clear sound as well. This process ran smoothly, each group received feedback. Then for some time it was revised and finalized until it finally entered the Testing Stage. Afterwards, the design was printed and distributed to the people of the Semampir District. While distributing the media, the team also conducted socialization to make sure everyone can use and understand each of these media. At this Testing Stage, in general, each media can be understood and attracts the attention of the people. Due to the great attention and good response from the residents, this project even had the opportunity to be covered by local TV stations (SBO TV, 2021) and also the East Java Tribun newspaper (Arif & Wijayanto, 2021).



Fig 5. Campaign Coverage by SBO TV

Therefore this project not only has an impact on local residents, but also inspires other areas. In addition to being covered by the mass media, this social campaign "Semampir M.A.I.N." successfully win a Silver award at a national level competition, namely the Pinasthika Creative Festival in the Bawana Advertising – Mix Media – Social Movement Campaign category (Carissa & Puspitasari, 2022). After the entire series of service learning is completed, the final stage is reflection. This is the first service learning activity to be carried out in a hybrid mode in the VCD PCU study program. The students' reflections were very good, they could learn to apply their knowledge of designing various media to real cases. They are happy to be able to contribute to bring a good influence on the Semampir District. Even a hybrid system like this can still be effective. Although several stages of the research were quite limited and not as flexible as if carried out in full onsite, overall there were no significant obstacles. In fact, there are a number of things that are felt to be more effective with a hybrid SL like this. For example, the meeting process does not need to be held onsite, but can be done online, and so does the mentoring process between students and lecturers/ assistants. The use of video meetings is very helpful for coordination during the SL process.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, the hybrid service learning in the VCD PCU Visual Communication Media class has been implemented well to support the Gugah Nurani Indonesia Foundation (GNI) CDP Surabaya program in 5 Sub-districts in Semampir District, Surabaya. These designed media are based on an in-depth research process related to a variety of creative media and also the characteristics of the people in Ujung, Sidotopo, Ampel, Wonokusumo and Pegirian Sub-districts. This creative media is designed with the theme M.A.I.N. which can be interpreted as

"main/important thing", "play", and is also an abbreviation of: *Maskeran* (wearing a mask), *Ambil jarak* (keep your distance), *Ingat cuci tangan* (remember to wash your hands), *Nyaman semuanya* (everyone will feel comfortable). Designed media includes: floor games, banners, tablecloths, t-shirts, stickers, interactive brochures, and also jingle. Students can also learn many things through this service learning even though it is implemented in a hybrid mode. Students can apply what they learn to the wider community, even having a positive impact on society and being covered by various mass media. In the coverage of SBO TV, the Head of GNI, Head of 5 Sub-Districts, and Head of Semampir District really appreciate the whole series of creative visual media which can create great impact to the residents in the 5 sub-districts in Semampir District, Surabaya. Creative ideas like this can also be implemented in various areas in Surabaya for more people to comply with health protocols in the new normal era. This type of hybrid service learning is also recommended to be further applied at other projects.

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