Excellence Public Relation Model in Social Media: A Content Analysis of Tweets and Feedback on Twitter @DitjenPajakRI

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Abstract

The widespread use of social media among the public requires public relations practitioners to use social media also to build relationships with the public, including the Public Relations of the Directorate General of Taxes who has used social media, especially Twitter. This study aims (1) to determine the communication pattern that is used in delivering messages or tweets related to taxation, and (2) to discover tweets with which communication patterns get the most feedback from followers. This research is based on the theory of excellence in public relations from Grunig and Hunt, which emphasizes that public relations practitioners must focus on engagement and two-way communication to maximize the potential for long-term relationships with stakeholders including the public. This study uses a quantitative method with descriptive content analysis, by analyzing the content of tweets on the @DitjenPajakRI Twitter account based on aspects of communication patterns of Grunig and Hunt's public relations model and feedback to those tweets. The results of this study found that (1) based on the aspect of communication patterns only, Taxmin as a government public relations practitioner often uses the public information communication pattern that focuses on conveying messages and information to followers, and (2) based on the aspect of communication patterns and feedback from followers, the symmetrical two-way communication pattern is the communication pattern that gets the most feedback from followers, which prioritizes conversation, dialogue, and mutual understanding.

Keywords: *Excellence Public Relation Model, Communication Patterns, Government Public Relation, Twitter*

Introduction

The development of information and communication technology has contributed to creating diversity in media. According to John Vivian (2008), the existence of new internet-based media can go beyond the pattern of spreading traditional media messages, it is interactive and real-time (Nasrullah, 2016). The presence of new media, especially social media, is influential in daily activities, as indicated by the widespread use of social media among the public in various fields, including in the field of public relations (PR).

Based on the latest report from We Are Social and Kepios in Digital Indonesia 2022, Indonesia's total population reached 277.7 million in January 2022, with 204.7 million internet users (the penetration rate is 73.7% of the total population) and active social media users as many as 191.4 million (68.9%). Compared to the number of active social media users in 2021, there is a 12.6% increase or more than 21 million in the past year. This data shows that the number of internet users, especially on social media in Indonesia, continues to increase, but issues related to Covid-19 continue to influence research on internet adoption, so the actual number of internet users may be higher than this published figure. Furthermore, the top six social media often used in Indonesia are Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok, Telegram, and Twitter. The high use of social media is inseparable from the various features offered by each social media. Especially Twitter social media features including hashtags, threads, replies, retweets, mentions, likes, and shares.

In an organization, the role of public relations is significant to support the achievement of organizational goals. According to Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2011), public relations is a management function that builds and maintains good relations between the organization and the public that affect the success or failure of the organization. The Directorate General of Taxes (DGT) of the Republic of Indonesia (RI) is a government institution under the Ministry of Finance. The DGT has an essential role in state revenues, so the Public Relations of DGT also has an important task in realizing this goal.

DGT has regulated communication in social media in the Circular Letter of the Director General of Taxes Number SE-17/PJ/2017 concerning Guidelines for Communication within the DGT. Currently, the social media used by Public Relations of DGT include Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube. Practitioners of Public Relations of DGT as communicators are known as Taxmin and its followers as communicants called by greeting Kawan Pajak. This research is focused on the DGT Twitter account with account name @DitjenPajakRI, because Twitter is a communication medium that is widely used by organizations to communicate with the public compared to existing social media (Tania, 2020), and Twitter's ability to provide short and fast updates (Willmott & Wastom, 2012). In addition, Twitter is gaining attention from strategic communicators such as government public relations, for its ability to enhance communication campaigns, and Twitter has become the leading online social media for marketing and public relations efforts (Waters & Williams, 2011).

The public relations communication model that has been widely discussed is the public relations model, formulated by Professor James Grunig and Todd Hunt who proposed four public relations communication models such as publicity/press agentry, public information, two-way asymmetrical communication, and two-way symmetrical communication (Seitel, 2016). Furthermore, Grunig's research in the Excellence Project provides practical evidence that supports Grunig and Hunt's previously stated opinion that symmetrical communication practices are an effective model (Butterick, 2013). The theory of excellence in public relations emphasizes that public relations practitioners should focus on engagement and two-way communication to maximize the potential for long-term relationships with stakeholders, including the public (Grunig, 2009).

In interactive communication between the communicator and the communicant, feedback is essential to assess the success of the communication process. Feedback shows the relationship between the communicator's behavior, the communicants' response, and the effect of the communicants' response on the next communicator's behavior. With the various communication models that Taxmin uses in delivering its tweets, it is known that Taxmin's tweets get numerous feedback from followers, where feedback on Twitter can be in the form of replies, retweets, and favorites/likes. Therefore, the authors are interested (1) to determine the communication pattern that is used in delivering tweets related to taxation, and (2) to discover tweets with which communication patterns get the most feedback from followers, based on the Grunig and Hunt public relations excellence model through content analysis.

Literature Review

a. Government Public Relation

The definition of public relations according to Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2011) is a management function that identifies, builds, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics that determine its success and failure. Grunig and Hunt (1984) provide a more focused definition that public relations is the management of communication between an organization and its public (Butterick, 2013). Meanwhile, according to the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), Public Relations is a management function, which is continuous and planned, through public and private organizations and institutions seeking to win and retain understanding, sympathy, and support by evaluating public opinion about themselves, in order to correlate, as far as possible their policies and procedures, to achieve a more productive fulfillment of their common interests with planned and widely disseminated information (Sari, 2012).

According to Lattimore (2007), government public relations is a management function that determines goals and philosophies, and also helps organizations adapt to the demands of their constituents and their environment. In addition, the definition of public relations in government regulations, such as, in the Regulation of the Minister of Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucratic Reform Number 55 of 2011 concerning General Guidelines for Media Relations in Government Agencies, stated that government public relations is a public relations institutions and/or government public relations practitioners which performs management functions in persuasive, effective, and efficient information and communication area, to create harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships with the public through various means of public relations in order to create positive image and reputation of government agencies (Suprawoto, 2018).

b. Online Public Relation

The existence of interactive Internet Web 2.0, which is superior to the previous one-way Web 1.0, has brought a new media era, especially social media to a wider community, including PR activities (Sadeghi, 2011). New media have the potential to make PR more global, strategic, two-way and interactive, symmetrical or dialogical, and socially responsible (Grunig, 2009). In public relations, the term online PR is applied especially in the use of social media (Phillips & Young, 2009).

The Directorate General of Taxes (DGT) is a government institution under the Ministry of Finance. Public Relations of DGT has an important task to realize the government's goals in state revenues. Currently, the social media used by Public Relations of DGT as an online public relations tool in delivering education and information about taxation are Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube. This research is focused on the DGT Twitter account @DitjenPajakRI because Twitter is a communication medium that is widely used by organizations to communicate with the public compared to existing social media and Twitter has received attention from strategic communicators such as government public relations because of its ability to improve communication campaigns, and Twitter has become the leading online social media for marketing and public relations efforts (Tania, 2020; Waters & Williams, 2011).

c. Public Relation Model

In an organization, the role and function of public relations (PR) are vitally important to support achieving organizational goals. As stated by Cutlip, Center, & Broom (2011) that PR is a management function that builds and maintains good and beneficial relationships between organizations and the public that affect the success or failure of the organization.

James E. Grunig from the University of Maryland with Todd Hunt from Rutgers University identified communication models conducted by the organization in establishing relations with the public, by developing four public relations (PR) models introduced in 1984 in his book "Managing Public Relations" i.e. (1) publicity/press agentry, (2) public information, (3) two-way asymmetrical, and (4) two-way symmetrical (Butterick, 2013). Until now, Grunig and Hunt's public relations models have been widely quoted by PR scientists and practitioners (Kriyantono, Amrullah, & Destrity, 2017).

The four public relations models of Grunig and Hunt have their characteristics. First, the publicity model uses a one-way communication pattern from the organization to the public so that public relations uses more propaganda to get the media publicities, using persuasion and manipulation to influence the audience to behave as the organization desires. Second, the public information model uses a one-way communication pattern in which organizations focus more on delivering selected information to the public, using press releases and other one-way communication techniques to distribute organizational information. Third, two-way asymmetrical uses a two-way communication pattern by paying attention to public feedback but more directly to influence the public to adjust to the organization and not vice versa (imbalanced). Then fourth, two-way symmetrical uses a two-way communication pattern that uses communication to negotiate with the public, resolve conflicts, and promote mutual understanding and respect between the organization and its stakeholders (Butterick, 2013).

d. Social Media and Twitter

According to Correa, Hinsley, and de Zuniga, social media provides a mechanism for audiences to connect, communicate, and interact with each other and their mutual friends through instant messaging or social networking sites. Meanwhile, according to Gruzd, any website or web-based service includes the characteristics of web 2.0 and contains some aspect of user-generated content. Web 2.0 is used to describe an emerging way of using the internet, with more participatory and collaborative web browsing and creation and modification of online content by internet surfers (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017).

Twitter is a social media created by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams and launched in July 2006. Twitter is a microblog that allows users to send short messages known as tweets. Tweets were initially limited to 140 characters, but the limit was doubled to 280 for non-CJK languages in November 2017. Audio and video tweets remain limited to 140 seconds for most accounts. As of Q1 2019, Twitter had more than 330 million monthly active users.

Twitter's ability to provide instant updates to stakeholders is the highest reason why PR professionals should use it (Willmott & Wastom, 2012). Evans, Twomey, and Talan (2011) acknowledge that Twitter has enabled the voices of many to be heard internationally. Due to its openness in retweeting, and there are no restrictions on viewing a particular user's information by following that user, PR practice becomes more objective and accurate.

Methods

This research uses quantitative methods with descriptive content analysis. Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use (Krippendorff, 2004). Descriptive content analysis is a content analysis that is intended to describe in detail a particular message or text and to describe the aspects and characteristics of a message (Eriyanto, 2011).

This research analyzes the content of messages or tweets based on the aspect of communication patterns of Grunig and Hunt's public relations model and feedback on these tweets. The tweets in this

study are messages conveyed by Taxmin on the DGT's official Twitter account, @DitjenPajakRI, which can be accessed via the Twitter application or accessed at https://twitter.com/DitjenPajakRI. Tweets are taken from October to December 2021, with a total of 356 tweets. The reliability test is carried out by the intercoder reliability approach (Eriyanto, 2011).

The categorizations of communication patterns refers to the research conducted by Waters and Williams (2011), namely (1) publicity model where tweets are characterized by (a) Use of emoticons to express emotion and (b) Use of words that express emotion, (2) Public information model where tweets are characterized by (a) Providing updates and announcements from the DGT by using Twitter and (b) Providing information and reports from other organizations (or other users), (3) Two-way asymmetrical model where tweets are characterized by (a) Asking for specific feedback, (b) Asking for participation in a survey or poll, and (c) Asking to become involved with the DGT by using Twitter, and (4) Two-way symmetrical model where tweets are characterized by (a) Using publicly posted messages using Twitter's @ reply function (or retweet with comment function) for conversation, (b) Mentions of other Twitter users without attempting to engage in a conversation, and (c) Using a conversation to resolve conflict or to build mutual understanding. At the same time, the feedback of tweet categories are (1) Reply, which is the number of feedback from followers who reply to Taxmin's tweets, (2) Retweet, which is the number of feedback from followers who repost Taxmin's tweets, and (3) Favorite/Like, which is the number of feedback from followers by liking Taxmin's tweet on the @DitjenPajakRI account.

Result and Discussion

This study explains the communication pattern in the tweets conveyed by Taxmin based on the Grunig and Hunt public relations model and describes the feedback from followers on the tweets. Of the total 356 tweets analyzed, the most frequently used communication pattern is public information with 249 tweets (69.94%), then publicity with 53 tweets (14.89%), two-way symmetrical with 37 tweets (10.39%), and two-way asymmetrical with only 17 tweets (4.78%). All of these tweets received 95,681 feedback, in the form of 47,910 retweets (50.07%), 44,699 favorites/likes (46.72%), and 3,072 replies (3.21%).
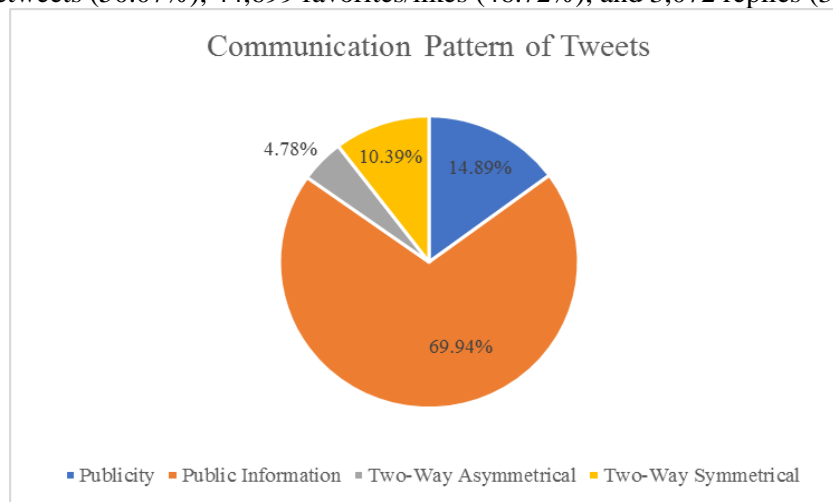
Graphic 1. Communication Pattern of Tweets

Cross-tabulation between communication patterns and feedback is used to discover tweets with which communication patterns get the most feedback from followers. From the cross-tabulation results, the communication pattern that received the most feedback was two-way symmetrical with 46,381 feedback (48.47%), then public information with 34,420 feedback (35.97%), publicity with 11,513 feedback (12.03%), and two-way asymmetrical with 3,367 feedback (3.52%).
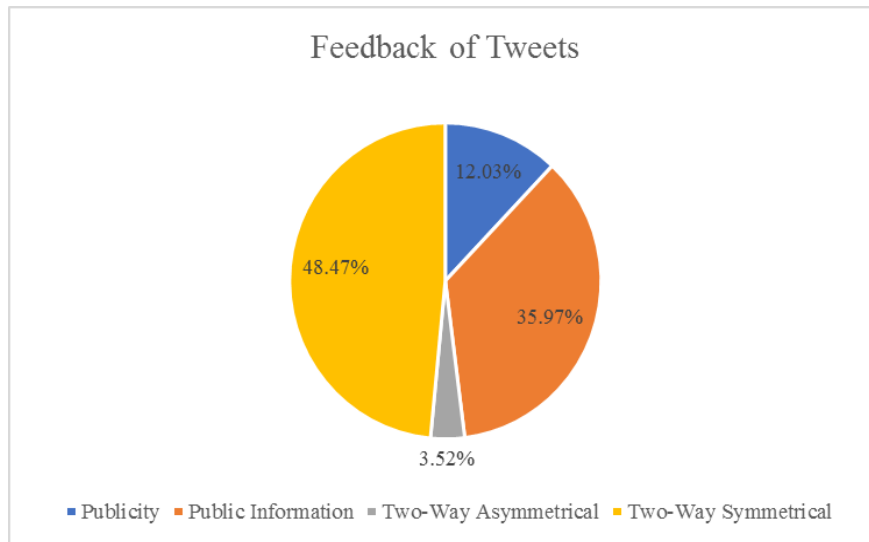
Graphic 2. Communication Pattern and Feedback of Tweets

The results of the cross-tabulation between communication patterns and feedback of tweets for each communication pattern, specifically:

a. Two-Way Symmetrical

The communication pattern of two-way symmetrical prioritizes conversation and mutual understanding between Taxmin and its followers. Tweets with a two-way symmetrical communication pattern get the most feedback compared to other communication patterns. Two-way symmetrical tweets received 46,381 feedback in the form of 28,613 favorites (61.69%), 15,892 retweets (34.26%), and 1,876 replies (4.04%). The tweet that received the highest feedback was "Tutorial Pengisian SPT 1770 Menggunakan E-FORM" including a Youtube link for the tutorial. In this tweet, Taxmin tried to build a conversation with their followers by quoting a tweet from a follower who was showing off his wealth on Twitter. The tweet then invited a lot of responses from other followers. This tweet can get 25,346 feedback in the form of 16,897 favorites, 7,395 retweets, and 1,054 replies.

The second high-feedback tweet related to filling out the annual tax return (SPT) attachment was "Tentang Penthouse 5M" with an image. This tweet is associated with the happening drama series titled "Layangan Putus". In this tweet, Taxmin responded well to follower responses and questions and managed to attract followers' attention, some of whom are fans of this series. The tweet received abundant responses from followers with 4,992 feedback in the form of 3,698 favorites, 1,150 retweets, and 144 replies.

The third high-feedback tweet is ">100% 27/12/2021 17.00 WIB 🚀" accompanied by an infographic. In this tweet, Taxmin responded well to follower responses and expressed appreciation for the contributions and participation of followers who have supported the achievement of tax revenue targets. The achievement of tax revenue in 2021 is phenomenal because amid the economic slowdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and for 12 years the tax revenue target has not been achieved. Taxmin's tweet received a lot of responses from followers with 3,311 feedback in the form of 1,732 favorites, 1,465 retweets, and 114 replies.

b. Public Information

The communication pattern of public information focuses on delivering messages and information from Taxmin to followers. Public information tweets received 34,420 feedback in the form of

10,039 favorites (29.17%), 23,717 retweets (68.90%), and 664 replies (1.93%). The tweet that received high feedback was "Sekilas tentang #RUUHPP Bagi #KawanPajak yang mungkin bertanya-tanya apa sih sebenarnya yang tertuang dalam #RUUHPP -Sebuah Utas-" accompanied by an image. In this tweet, Taxmin focused on conveying information about the Tax Regulation Harmonization Bill (RUU HPP) to followers. Taxmin made a tweet in the tweet thread to outline the points that change in this latest law. Taxmin's tweet received a response from followers with as many as 1,129 feedback in the form of 615 favorites, 507 retweets, and 7 replies.

c. Publicity

The communication pattern of publicity aims to influence followers according to the message from Taxmin. Publicity tweets received 11,513 feedback in the form of 4,940 favorites, 6,278 retweets, and 295 replies. The tweet that received high feedback was "abc_efghi_klmno_qrstuvwxyz □". In this tweet, Taxmin used emoticons to express emotion and affected followers with messages identical to Korean. This tweet immediately received enormous attention from followers, some of whom were Korean fans or fandoms known as the army. Although this tweet was entertainment in nature and did not discuss tax-related aspects, this tweet was able to get responses from followers as many as 3,026 feedback in the form of 2,194 favorites, 699 retweets, and 133 replies.

d. Two-Way Asymmetrical

The communication pattern of two-way asymmetrical pays attention to feedback from followers and tends to influence followers to conform to Taxmin's message and not vice versa. Two-way asymmetrical tweets received 3,367 feedback in the form of 1,107 favorites, 2,023 retweets, and 237 replies. The tweet that received high feedback was "Yang dipamerin sama ga dengan yang dimasukin di SPT Tahunan? □" accompanied with a picture. In this tweet, Taxmin quoted a tweet from a follower who was showing off his wealth on Twitter. Taxmin asked the follower but did not carry out further conversations. Taxmin's tweet received a response from followers with as many as 716 feedback in the form of 312 favorites, 363 retweets, and 41 replies.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that (1) based on the aspect of communication patterns only, this study shows that Taxmin as a government public relations practitioner often uses public information communication patterns that focus on conveying messages and information to followers, and (2) based on the aspect of communication patterns and feedback from followers, this study shows that the symmetrical two-way communication pattern is the communication pattern that gets the most feedback from followers, which is Grunig and Hunt's excellence public relations model.

This study found that to get high feedback tweets from followers, it is required a two-way symmetrical communication pattern that prioritizes conversation, dialogue, and mutual understanding. Furthermore, the findings of this study can be used as input to public relations practitioners to build good relations between organizations and the public and support organizational achievements.

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