Communication of Leaders (Baby Boomers) in the Digital Era (Case Study: Transition from Conventional to Online at PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk)

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Abstract

The research objectives are: 1) to find out how the leader communication strategy of Tempo Media Group in the transformation process from conventional to online, 2) to find out whether baby boomers are able to adapt to the millennials generation; especially in the transition process at PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk, 3) to find out the views of millennials towards baby boomers, especially the view when receiving communication messages from company leaders in the transformation process at Tempo Media Group. This research applies descriptive qualitative method and chooses a case study to find out more in detail the phenomenon of leader communication that has the characteristics of baby boomers in the digital era. In addition, this research will review more in the communication strategies of Tempo Media Group directors on the process of organizational change from conventional to online. The research findings found that the transformation of the digital era disrupts several jobs, changes consumer behavior and is able to read market needs and interests by presenting current and appropriate programs by embracing the millennials based on the interest of the readers. The transformational leader at Tempo applies a communication strategy with communication matching features to the millennial’s generation based on the negative behavior of employees who are reluctant to change because they are comfortable with the Tempo situation.

Keywords: Communication; Baby Boomer; Digital, Conventional Transition; Media

Introduction

Digital transformation is a business transformation in the modern era. According to the microsoft.com website, through digital transformation, a company can get a new perspective on the use of Big Data, optimize company operations, and change business models to be more efficient (Tempo, 2018). Optimizing the leader’s strategy in the transformation process is necessary. According to Yammarino et. al., (2001), the leadership process in organizations is expected to be able to provide results in the form of team building, which is a form of team leadership that realizes that employees need to be involved in each business strategy and make teamwork part of a oriented organization to strategy; i.e. delegation and participation.
Tempo Inti Media Tbk (Tempo Media Group) is one of the media companies in Indonesia with the inaugural edition of Tempo through conventional media published in 1971 which promotes honest and balanced news coverage and presentation of interesting and humorous prose.

As a company that departs from conventional business, Tempo is able to read changes in consumer consumption in Indonesia. Based on data from the 2017 Tempo Inti Media Tbk Annual Report, Tempo observes that consumer lifestyles lead to digital lifestyles; therefore, it affects the tight competition of telecommunication service providers and activities in the media. Therefore, Tempo solidified its strategy of entering the digital media business, whose foundation has been implemented since 2016 (Annual Report Tempo, 2017 p.6).

Digital transformation carried out by Tempo was supported by the ownership of Human Resources which also began to transform and move from conventional printing units to digital units. This change has a significant impact on Tempo. As per the data in the Tempo Annual Report 2017, the circulation of digital products grew by 16.5 percent throughout 2017. However, Tempo did not abandon its conventional business even though conventional business circulation such as print magazines continued to decline.

Y. Tomi (2018) believes that in the transformation process at Tempo, the reluctance of each employee was based on uncertainty about what happened in the digital era. Both employees and leaders expected that the change in communication in the digital era would be temporary and would not have an impact on the existence of Tempo as one of the media companies in Indonesia.

Regarding the different generations in the Tempo company, several studies have found that generalized interpretations have an impact on the communication gap between the Baby Boomers and X, Y, Z generations in a company organization (Venter, 2017). It is because individuals are labeled, categorized or interpreted based on the year of birth. From the point of view of several generations, someone will be associated with the values and work attitudes of each individual based on the characteristics of their generation.

The phenomenon of communication inequality and the generalization of viewpoints on different generations in an organization can be a trigger factor if an organization or company will carry out a transformation policy, considering the decision to make changes and transformations implemented by the company will involve all internal and external stakeholders. In this case, the main priority is employees as the company’s internal stakeholders.

Previous research (Respati, 2014) explained that Kompas transformation is implemented through the process of media convergence; i.e. a strategy carried out by a company or mass media in welcoming the digital era, in 1998 and is triggered by the phenomenon of using internet networks to obtain information.

Along with technological developments and the situation of the business environment in the media industry, Kompas continues to transform into the digital era from 2009 by presenting multimedia, multi-channel and multiplatform through the presence of Kompas Gramedia Television - Kompas Gramedia TV which became the Kompas business expansion. Kompas TV is also one of the outputs of convergence activities that combine conventional communication and one-way electronic-based mass communication with audio visual.

Tempo media group conducts several business innovations by expanding business from conventional directions to digital online media. Based on the preliminary study conducted by researchers, the change or transformation process still has problems due to differences in generations in Tempo Media Group.

Transforming towards online with all the needs of digital media is very different from the realization of conventional media. To Tempo employees, especially journalists who during their careers learned how to make stories for conventional media readers such as magazines, they still find it difficult to transform into employees who have multimedia capacity (Kristin & Sardjono, 2013).
Based on data from Employees of PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk, there are 3 (three) generations there that consist of Baby Boomers by 5%, and are dominated by X generation by 47% and Y generation by 48%.

**Research Method**

In this study, researchers will apply qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative research is defined as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from people and observed behavior (Moloeng, 2014). The researcher chose a case study to find out more in detail the phenomenon of leader communication characterized by baby boomers in the digital age (Yin, 2011). This study will review more about the Tempo Media Group Directors’ communication strategy on the process of changing conventional organizations to online. This is intended to obtain information on the effectiveness of communication from the leadership to the entire team of several generations starting from the Baby Boomers, X generation, and Y (the millennials).

**Research Focus**

The researcher will focus on the communication strategy of Transformational Leadership in influencing the entire generation or team in the conventional transformation process towards Tempo Media Group’s online company. Unit Analysis is something that is related to the focus under study. In this study, the analysis unit is the Tempo Inti Media Tbk (Tempo Media Group) Company. Meanwhile, the object to be analyzed is the leaders of Tempo Media namely the Managing Director of PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk; thus, later the researchers will examine the communication strategies of Tempo leaders who are characterized by the Baby Boomers towards the millennial generations in the conventional transition process towards Online at Tempo to maintain the existence of its media company in Indonesia.

**Data Collection Technique**

In this study, data collection technique utilized: 1) direct observation, 2) interview, 3) indirect observation (secondary data).

**Informant/ Resource Person**

The informants who will be selected in this study are several informants from Tempo Media Group. The informant selection technique is a technique that includes people who are selected on the basis of certain criteria based on the objectives of the research. Meanwhile, people in the population that do not fit the criteria are not selected as samples (Sugiyono, 2010). In this study, researchers used participants who were directly related to the research topic.

**Results**

**Analysis of Transformational Leadership**

Analysis of the research results was carried out using interview technique (direct observation) to the informants and indirect observation through supporting data of Tempo archives. Interviews were carried out in the period June 2018 to January 2019. The informants include:

X Generation:

Mr. Y. Tomi Arianto, Director of Info Media Digital Tempo.co (TA)
Baby Boomer Generation:
Mr. Thoriq Hadad, President Director of PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk (TH)

X Generation:
Dodi Waspodo, Marketing Communication Manager of PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk (DW)

Y Generation:
Ana, Secretary of the Board of Directors (AN)

Idealized Influence

Based on the results of the interview, the Tempo Media Group leader has been open to communication. In addition, in delivering the vision and mission message to all employees at Tempo, he even gave an opportunity to discuss directly or indirectly through the Employee Council as a representative of the Trade Union. There were no barriers between them because the Tempo Leader considered all the same. An honor is directed at a work not to someone. Tempo management was late to take the step of transformation in the digital era, even though Tempo could have been the pioneer of the digital era with the presence of digital portals that existed since 1996. However, they only made changes to the online period in 2011 with tempo.co (online Tempo). It is because Tempo was too comfortable with its conventional products; i.e. Tempo Magazine.

Individual Consideration

The leader at Tempo obtained data on employees who had decreased performance or those who had good achievements. Data on differences in generations at Tempo also found that after the coaching process, leaders at Tempo acknowledged and found that the millennial generation had multitasking abilities compared to their seniors. Regardless of the difference in generation, Tempo is always ready with cadres of leaders, as expressed by the Director of Tempo that good organizations are organizations whose cadre runs. The dimension of individual consideration also found data that the leader in Tempo opened access to communication online through WhatsApp group; one of them is the WhatsApp Board of Directors of Tempo. According to the leader at Tempo, this communication is needed to find out business developments in Tempo Group.

Intellectual Stimulation

Based on the results of interviews, from the informants’ information, there was indeed no special intellectual stimulation from the leaders at Tempo, even though there was 24-hour access to the communication interaction process. Currently, the transformation in the conventional transition period towards Tempo is still experiencing obstacles or constraints which, according to them, are caused by a declining situation by every employee at Tempo.

Every employee has a clear Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), meaning that there is no special stimulation. Their employees will be seen from the results of their respective works; for instance, the results of their news coverage. This difference in generation in Tempo was also recognized by TH that millennials tended to have more multitasking competencies compared to their senior generation. However, there are obstacles to transformation from conventional to online until now, as stated by TA and it was confirmed to TH that Tempo Management provided flexible policies to conventional media reporters with online media reporters especially for different work rhythms.

Intellectual stimulation for Tempo transformation during conventional transitions to online was not fully experienced by employees. For instance, according to AN, significant changes were found in the editorial section. For back office, sections, such as secretaries, finance and others did not experience the
Tempo transformation. The researcher analyzes the existence of an uninformed Tempo transformation to all employees at Tempo; for example, through a bulletin for Tempo employees or other formal communication media that was implemented at Tempo.

Inspirational Motivation

Based on the interview results, leaders at Tempo have implemented changes and adapted to the digital era. The conventional transition period towards online has been proven by Tempo through several program implementations. Like what TH said, Tempo is seriously involved in the digital world by following the tastes of readers, some change programs have been paired with operations in Tempo and are adjusting to the wishes and interests of today’s millennials. For instance, Tempo acquired several start-up companies as well as digital animation programs that were also popular with millennials. Some youth communities such as automotive, travel, startup make it easier for Tempo to establish relationships and also obtain up-to-date news material. Tempo is now the one in which tempo.co has provided current news searches. From some of these data, according to researchers, leaders at Tempo have implemented inspirational motivations that not only follow the tastes of the reader (external factors) but also motivate their internal employees by directing the team to collaborate with a number of communities favored by generations of millennials and transition programs.

![Figure 1. Tempo Document of Conventional Media (Print Media) Source: Tempo Annual Report 2017](image1)

![Figure 2. Tempo Online Document (tempo.co) for Techno content](image2)

![Figure 3. Tempo Online Document (tempo.co) for cantika.com content](image3)
In its communication interaction, transformational leadership at the time of transition in Tempo was associated with Judee Burgoon theory of interaction adaptation (Interaction Adaptation Theory), because there was a synchronization between Needs, Expectations, Desires in the Leader and Employee interaction process (RED: Requirement, Expectation, Desire) (Burgoon & Hubbard, 2005). In this case, communication interactions to achieve the desired goals in this study are the objectives of the changes applied at Tempo (Sofyan, 2019).

**RED (Requirement, Expectation, Desire)**

The use of the RED element in this study was when transformational leaders interact with the team in delivering the company’s vision and mission, transformation programs and the intent and purpose of transforming conventional transitions to online to employees in each communication process. Communication features in this theory are related to adaptive responses, interpersonal coordination, matching, mirroring, convergence, reciprocity, mimicry, compensation, divergence complementarity, synchrony, desynchrony. So, it can produce whether the individual behaves positively (positively behavior) or negatively (negatively behavior) from the results of the communication interaction.

**IAT on Idealized Influence**

The President Director has briefed the intent and purpose of carrying out the transformation according to the company’s vision and mission, and currently Tempo continues to adjust to the digital era.
Although initially employees were reluctant to change because they were comfortable, but the changes still went through adjustments in the digital era. In terms of behavior, people of the baby boomer generation are people who always follow the rules or norms, meaning that if he/she says A, it has to be A, it is rather vulnerable to accepting something new; for example, technology. However, due to the demands of work and Tempo engaged in the media, the Leader must follow new innovations in the digital era.

Leaders at Tempo (the Baby Boomer generation) use matching features when interacting with generation millennials. Yet, according to the RED element in Idealized Influence in transformational leadership, responds of millennials generation to leaders do not seem like what the leaders want. As the result, there is negative behavior on employees (Negatively Behavior), because according to the statement of TA informant, the employees are reluctant to change during the conventional transition period to online, they are comfortable with the Tempo situation.

**IAT on Individual Consideration**

The Managing Director of Tempo is open to listening to Tempo group’s business plan programs and providing directions in the forum. He also applies coaching to employees who need motivation, and the application of coaching is also applied in subsidiaries or Tempo Group. Coaching is carried out for employees at the Board of Directors and Manager levels at Tempo as part of the evaluation.

When the coaching process takes place, the common problems experienced by employees whose performance has declined are family problems, the inability to adjust the competencies of other friends and lack of discipline. The coaching process is called the Tempo Clinic to evaluate and motivate employees who need it. Leaders at Tempo (the Baby Boomer generation) use compensating communication features when interacting with millennial generations of through the coaching process. It is intended to balance millennial employees so that they are open to leaders because they want to be listened. Based on the results of the interaction of RED elements in the IAT theory, transformational leadership in this individual consideration results in positive behavior. This is evident from the results of coaching where employees want to make changes and Tempo has leaders’ cadres. In addition, the career path in Tempo is in line with the performance and work that employees produce at Tempo.

**IAT on Intellectual Stimulation**

To stimulate employees, the directors open 24-hour active communication access for coordination and business operations of Tempo through several communication media (WhatsApp, telephone, e-mail, face-to-face) and others. Transformational leaders at Tempo (the Baby Boomer generation) do not interact specifically with communication in providing intellectual stimulation regarding the transformation or change in the conventional transition period to online at Tempo. Although the directors open access to all communication media to coordinate without time constraints in 24 hours; however, there is no stimulation to employees of these changes. So, that the employees at Tempo responded to the stimulation with the communication features of Divergence (distortions) of the expectations and desires of the directors as in the RED element in the IAT theory.

As a result, employees behave negatively (Negatively Behavior) because of the declining situation or reluctance to change according to the expectations of Tempo Management due to the lack of an approach to employees regarding the transformation of the conventional transition to online at Tempo.

**IAT on Inspirational Motivation**

Tempo built infrastructure from the phenomenon of market needs regarding digital. Currently, readers want a news information platform that they can access on smartphones, laptops, I-pad and so on.
It was proven through changes towards digital by following the tastes of the readers. That is the way conducted to adjust to the digital era.

In communication interaction, transformational leaders in Tempo (the Baby Boomer generation) provide promotional motivation both to the internal team and to external Tempo readers. The way leaders in Tempo interact in providing inspiration is by presenting several programs that are preferred by millennial generations. Thus, if it is associated with the IAT communication theory, Tempo (baby boomers) transformational leaders use the mirroring feature to millennials generation internally and externally to Tempo readers. From this analysis, the RED element in inspirational motivation is in accordance with what readers and internal employees want (generation millennials) at Tempo. Thus, the results of the interaction on the IAT analysis are positive behavior of millennials in Tempo to adjust to the Tempo transition period.

Discussion

Transformational Leadership

According to Bass & Avolio (1994), there are 4 dimensions to motivating transformational leaders to their teams in achieving a corporate goal consisting of Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Individualized Consideration and Intellectual Stimulation. The Inspirational Motivation dimension also includes the encouragement or motivation of the leader to his/her team to achieve a goal.

a. Transformational leaders have charismatic and role models in the eyes of their team in conveying the company’s vision and mission. They are expected to have an influence on Idealized Influence for their employees or team.

b. Transformational leaders have individualized considerations to their employees through coaching; leaders who want to listen and give attention to their team.

c. The transformation from the conventional to online transition implemented by PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk was not fully informed to employees at Tempo. Based on data from informants, this was due to the absence of transition period stimulation to all employees at Tempo.

d. In the transformation from the conventional to online transition at PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk, in its communication interaction process, transformational leaders of Tempo have seriously inspired generations by engaging in the digital world through several programs that are preferred by millennial generations.

e. Tempo Transformational Leaders inspire millennial employees in Tempo to collaborate with several communities that are preferred by young people and make them work partners, to have news inspiration from the community.

Communication Theory of Interaction Adaptation Theory (IAT)

The process of communication interaction according to this theory is a form of response where each interacting individual will respond to each other according to the RED element on the IAT; thus, it results in positive behavior or negative behavior from the results of the communication interaction.
Adaptation interaction was obtained through the interview method in Tempo regarding transformational leadership in the conventional toward online transition period at PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk.

**IAT on Idealized Influence**

From the results of communication interactions on Idealized Influence transformational leadership, data shows that leaders in Tempo use the communication matching feature when interacting with millennial generations. However, the results are not in accordance with what the leaders expect, i.e. negative behavior (Negatively Behavior) by millennial employees in Tempo who are reluctant to change.

\[
\text{Transformational Leaders (Baby Boomers)} \quad \text{MATCHING} \quad \text{Employees (Millennials)}
\]

\[
\text{Employees (Millennials)} \quad \text{DIVERGE} \quad \text{Transformational Leaders (Baby Boomers)}
\]

**Negatively Valanced Behavior: Employees feel comfortable and are reluctant to change**

*Figure 7. Document 1 Researcher Analysis Results based on IAT Communication Theory, Judee Burgoon*

**IAT on Individual Consideration**

Based on data from the results of communication interactions on the transformational leadership of Individual Consideration, it is found that the Leader at Tempo in the conventional to online transition used the Compensate communication feature when interacting with millennial generation through a coaching process. Thus, the employees want to be open and leaders also want to listen to their employees. From the results of these interactions, it produces positive behavior; i.e. the attitude obtained after coaching is that employees want to improve their performance at Tempo.

\[
\text{Transformational Leader (Baby Boomers)} \quad \text{COMPENSATE} \quad \text{Employees (Millennials)}
\]

**Positively Valanced Behavior: Employees improve their performance after communication interactions in the form of direction by the Leader**

*Figure 8. Document 2 Researcher Analysis Results based on IAT Communication Theory, Judee Burgoon*

**IAT on Intellectual Stimulation**

Based on the data, from the results of communication interactions between leaders of the Baby Boomers and employees of the Millennials in Tempo, there is no specific approach or stimulation regarding the change or transformation of conventional to online transition from the leader to employees at Tempo, even though the leader has opened communication media access to coordinate with them. Therefore, employees respond with divergence and negative behavior and declining (rejection) situations.
Communication of Leaders (Baby Boomers) in the Digital Era (Case Study: Transition from Conventional to Online at PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk)

Transformational Leaders (Baby Boomers) CONVERGE Employees (Millennials)

Employees (Millennials) DIVERGE Transformational Leaders (Baby Boomers)

Negatively Valanced Behavior: Declining by Tempo Employees

IAT on Inspirational Motivation

It was found that when the communication interaction on transformational leadership took place, the leader at Tempo provided inspirational motivation to internal employees at Tempo and also to Tempo readers through up-to-date programs. The leader at Tempo applied the mirroring feature to millennials in their communication interactions. So, employees are inspired to take part in programs implemented by Tempo management.

Transformational Leader (Baby Boomers) MIRRORING Employees (Millennials)

Positively Valanced Behavior: Employees are inspired to take part in the conventional to online transition program at Tempo

Findings

Based on the phenomenon that occurs in society, baby boomers tend to be difficult to adapt to the millennial generation in the digital era. Based on data obtained by researcher, this phenomenon does not apply in Tempo Media Group, because the President Director of PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk is able to adapt to the millennial generation in this digital era with the following findings:

- During the conventional to online transition, the Tempo leaders opened access to communications for all Tempo employees to discuss and coordinate online or face-to-face and even gave the opportunity to coaching employees at Tempo.
- During the conventional to online transition period, leaders in Tempo adjusted and matched the millennial generation.
- The leaders at Tempo are able to read the needs and interests of the market by presenting up-to-date and appropriate programs by embracing the millennial segment according to the tastes of the readers.
- Even though they are baby boomer generation, leaders at Tempo want to learn from millennials whose multitasking abilities are recognized from adaptability, language, networking skills and digital devices.

The transformational leader at Tempo applies communication feature of matching to the millennial generation. However, the results are not what the leaders expect where employees behave negatively (Negatively Behavior) and are reluctant to change because they are comfortable with the Tempo situation. From the search results, researcher found data that the declining situation was caused by
Tempo management who did not carry out special stimulation regarding Tempo changes and did not carry out organizational communication stages of “communicating during unfreezing stage” by preparing employees for changes in the transition period at Tempo.

The Tempo leaders applied the culture of Tempo’s founder to be egalitarian, which considered that all were equal. Therefore, there are no obstacles in the communication interaction process. Based on data, Tempo’s decision to transform towards digital was indeed admittedly late even though in 1996 they had the first portal.com. It is because Tempo still believes that the digital era is only temporary and they still continue to rely on the glory of conventional media product business in the form of Tempo magazine.

Tempo is able to read market tastes and interests, especially those preferred by young people through online news content. However, this change is not continuously informed to internal employees. Based on data obtained by the researcher, significant changes were made to the Tempo Editorial Team. There were some employees who were not aware of the transition at Tempo. In the transition period, it was found the fact that there were obstacles between the rhythm of work of conventional journalists who could not adjust to the rhythm of the online work journalists. However, the leaders at Tempo gave a flexible policy to conventional media reporters with online media reporters to contribute to each other because the contribution of business growth in Tempo still had an effect on Tempo’s conventional business. This is also caused by no concrete communication regarding changes in Tempo’s internal.

When communication interactions with generation millennials took place, Tempo leaders wanted to keep up with employees so that they were inspired by programs implemented by Tempo Management. Tempo’s reason for transformation is because leaders realize the digital era has disrupted several jobs and are aware of changes in consumer behavior. However, Tempo retained the conventional product of Tempo Magazine because its contribution to growth data was still significant at Tempo.

Conclusion

The conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. Transformational leadership in Tempo confirms the phenomenon in the community that baby boomers tend to find it difficult to adapt to the millennial generation in the digital era. The fact that occurred at Tempo was that the President Director of PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk had the characteristics of a baby boomer who was able to adapt to the millennial generation in the digital era.

2. PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk is transformed by realizing that the digital era is disrupting several jobs, changes in consumer behavior, and the ability to read market needs and interests by presenting current and appropriate programs by embracing the millennials segment according to the tastes of the readers.

3. During the transformation on conventional to online transition, PT Tempo Inti Media Tbk retains the conventional product of Tempo Magazine because the contribution data of its growth is still significant at Tempo.

4. Transformational leaders at Tempo applies communication strategy using the communication matching feature to millennials based on the results of employee negative behavior (Negatively Behavior) who are reluctant to change because they feel comfortable with the Tempo situation. Tempo leaders are able to adjust within the company through the implementation of current programs that change employees to behave positively by adapting to changes in Tempo.

5. Based on the search results, the researcher found that the declining situation was caused by the Tempo Management for not making special stimulations regarding the Tempo changes and not performing the stages of organizational communication of “communicating during unfreezing stage” by preparing employees for changes in the transition period at Tempo.
Suggestion

To strengthen the research perspective on the phenomenon of Baby Boomers leaders in the digital era, further research can be carried out quantitatively by measuring the role of organizational change in the digital era. Future research can be conducted by comparing the strategies between the communication of Baby Boomer leaders and Millennial leaders in the digital era. The application of continuous communication through stimulation leads to continuous change. It is intended that employees have an understanding of the implications of change. In short, IAT Communication Theory can be useful for leaders to stimulate all employees regarding the changes that apply in the organization.

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