

GOVERNMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY TO IMPROVE WEST BANDUNG PERCEPTION USING 4C CONCEPT

Dini Siti Ramadhanty^{*1}, Reza Saeful Rachman², Daniel Paulus Evert³,
Tanto Trisno Mulyono⁴, Puan Arsi Annash⁵

Universitas Sangga Buana^{*1,2,3,4,5}

Email: reza.saeful@usbykp.ac.id^{*1,2,3,4,5}

Abstract

This study aims to determine the impact of Instagram social media management on improving the reputation of the West Bandung Regency Government. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman analysis model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study indicate that the management of the Instagram account @prokompim_kbb is aimed at building and enhancing the positive image of the West Bandung Regency Government. The strategies employed are based on Chris Heuer's 4C theory, namely: Context, Communications, Collaborations, and Connections. First, context plays a crucial role in message formation, specifically how narratives and captions are crafted using appropriate and effective language to align with the information being conveyed. Second, communications emphasize the importance of internal communication before content is published to ensure the content and purpose of the message are consistent. Third, collaborations are carried out through cooperation between the @prokompim_kbb admin and all regional and village government agencies in producing relevant content. Fourth, connections are established by forming WhatsApp groups and conducting technical guidance sessions with social media administrators at the regional and village levels to strengthen communication networks and social media management capabilities. Overall, social media management based on the 4C concept has proven effective in supporting efforts to enhance the reputation of local governments through digital platforms.

Keywords: Government public relations strategy, image, Instagram

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dampak pengelolaan media sosial Instagram terhadap peningkatan reputasi Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten Bandung Barat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model analisis Miles dan Huberman yang mencakup reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengelolaan akun Instagram @prokompim_kbb ditujukan untuk membangun dan meningkatkan citra positif Pemerintah Kabupaten Bandung Barat. Strategi yang digunakan mengacu pada teori 4C dari Chris Heuer, yaitu: Context, Communications, Collaborations, dan Connections.

Pertama, context berperan penting dalam proses pembentukan pesan, yaitu bagaimana narasi dan caption disusun menggunakan bahasa yang tepat dan efektif agar sesuai dengan konteks informasi yang disampaikan. Kedua, communications menekankan pentingnya komunikasi internal sebelum konten dipublikasikan, untuk memastikan kesesuaian isi dan tujuan pesan. Ketiga, collaborations dilakukan melalui kerja sama antara admin @prokompim_kbb dengan seluruh perangkat daerah dan desa dalam memproduksi konten yang relevan. Keempat, connections diwujudkan dengan membentuk grup WhatsApp dan menyelenggarakan bimbingan teknis bersama para admin media sosial di tingkat daerah dan desa, guna memperkuat jejaring komunikasi dan kapasitas pengelolaan media sosial. Secara keseluruhan, pengelolaan media sosial berbasis konsep 4C terbukti efektif dalam mendukung upaya peningkatan reputasi pemerintah daerah melalui platform digital.

Kata Kunci: Strategi hubungan masyarakat pemerintah, citra, Instagram

INTRODUCTION

Public relations (PR) is the process of communication and interaction between an organization and the public to shape opinion, increase understanding, encourage action, and build engagement. The purpose of these activities is to create mutual benefits, form a positive image, and strengthen positive perceptions of the organization (Margraf dkk., 2020). In the context of government, the function of public relations becomes increasingly important because public perception of government performance is greatly influenced by the reputation and image built through public communication. As stated by Mansoor, (2021), public perception of the government's image is formed through information that is packaged and conveyed systematically through the media. In government communication management, public relations has two main functions: technical and managerial. The technical function includes activities such as writing, editing, photography, creating visual content, and interacting with the mass media. Meanwhile, the managerial function focuses more on the role of advisor, communication policy analyst, and facilitator in resolving organizational problems (Qu dkk., 2024). These functions are an important part of the performance of the West Bandung Regency Public Relations Office, which is carried out by the Protocol and Leadership Communication Subdivision (Prokompim).

Prokompim plays an important role as a liaison between the government and the community. Through its protocol and leadership communication functions, Prokompim is tasked with conveying regional leadership policies and ensuring their implementation in regional development. In addition, Prokompim also acts as the official spokesperson for the local government, tasked with establishing good relations with the community and the mass media, both print and electronic. The development of information and communication technology has encouraged local governments to be more adaptive to change. One form of innovation in public information delivery is the use of social media. Social media is considered capable of bridging the communication gap between the government and the community. One of the most popular platforms is Instagram. This platform offers attractive visual features, such as Stories, IGTV, filters, and high social interaction, making it an ideal medium for disseminating public information quickly and widely (Chen & and Aklikokou, 2020).

The West Bandung Regency Government, through its official Instagram account @prokompim_kbb, is striving to build effective communication with the community. This account was created in August 2018 as part of the transformation of its previous account, @humas_kbb. To date, the account has more than 26,000 followers and thousands of posts. The management of this account refers to a systematic communication strategy that utilizes the 4C concept proposed by Chris Heuer, namely Context, Communications, Collaborations, and Connections. The concept of *context* in 4C refers to how a message or story is framed before being delivered to the public. This framing includes the choice of language, narrative structure, and social context relevant to the issue being raised (Love dkk., 2023). In practice, the @prokompim_kbb team composes captions and visual content using language that is straightforward, polite, and easy to understand. The goal is to ensure that the information conveyed is not only informative but also capable of shaping positive public perceptions of government performance. According to Heuer, the way we frame a story plays an important role in building a deep understanding of an issue. The second element in the 4C concept is *communications*, which is the exchange of information that includes the ability to listen, respond, and convey messages appropriately. The communication carried out by Prokompim is not one-way. The public is given space to provide feedback, comments, and criticism through the comment feature on each post. This practice is in line with Harold D. Lasswell's view that effective communication answers five important elements: who is conveying the message, what the message is, through what channel, to whom, and with what impact (Masuda dkk., 2022). The Prokompim team also ensures that every post has gone through an internal communication process to ensure that the content is in line with leadership policies.

The third component is *collaborations*, which emphasizes cooperation between parties to improve communication effectiveness. In this case, Prokompim works with all regional and village agencies in preparing Instagram content. Each agency is asked to send information on activities and policies to be published. This form of collaboration expands the reach of information and improves the quality of the content displayed. This collaboration not only strengthens inter-agency relationships but also creates a richer and more inclusive narrative about local government activities. *Connections* refer to efforts to build and maintain relationships, especially with other social media account managers within the local government. Prokompim has formed a WhatsApp group with social media administrators from regional and village agencies to share information and technical training. Additionally, Prokompim conducts technical guidance (bimtek) to enhance administrators' skills in social media management. This aligns with the public relations function as a facilitator of communication and public image builder (Twum & Yalley, 2021).

However, the management of the Instagram account @prokompim_kbb faces various challenges, particularly limited human resources. The Documentation Sub-Division, which is responsible for this account, also handles other tasks such as photography, videography, scriptwriting, graphic design, and press release preparation. Unfortunately, not all members have comprehensive skills in these areas. Only one person is capable of

performing all these functions, resulting in an unbalanced workload and potentially compromising the quality and consistency of posts. The communication strategy implemented by Prokompim refers to Rogers' approach, which states that a communication strategy is a series of planned actions to achieve specific goals with available resources (Wu & Xiong, 2022).

In this context, Instagram is a strategic tool for building more open, fast, and participatory communication between the government and the public. The use of social media is also part of the digital transformation in public services, which emphasizes transparency, accountability, and emotional closeness between leaders and their people. In addition, public perception of the government's image is highly dependent on the effectiveness of public communication. Huang, (2022) states that image is an assessment formed based on public perception of an organization. Therefore, the success of government public relations in shaping positive perceptions will directly affect the reputation of the institution. In this case, social media is a key instrument in shaping public opinion and strengthening government legitimacy.

The use of social media also supports the function of public relations in disseminating policies, absorbing public aspirations, and increasing community participation in development. This is reinforced by Sun & Li, (2024), who emphasizes that the functions of public relations include conveying information, bridging two-way communication, and providing input to organizational leaders. The use of social media such as Instagram allows all these functions to run simultaneously and efficiently. By consistently applying Chris Heuer's 4C concept, the Public Relations Office of West Bandung Regency has been able to build more open and interactive communication with the public. Despite facing challenges in human resource management, this communication strategy has proven effective in increasing public participation and trust in the local government. In the rapidly evolving digital era, the success of government public relations in managing social media will become a key indicator in building a positive reputation and image.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. According to Mulyadi (2012), qualitative research is an approach that aims to understand human or social events through detailed and complex presentations that can be explained verbally. In this context, the research was conducted by examining in depth various perspectives from informants and was carried out in natural situations following the conditions prevailing in the field. Qualitative description allows researchers to obtain an authentic and accurate understanding and data. This study focuses on the management of the Instagram account @prokompim_kbb, which plays a role in enhancing the reputation of the West Bandung Regency Government. The account is used as a public communication medium to convey information, respond to various social phenomena and issues, and address emerging issues through effective social media management strategies. The purpose of this study is to obtain complete and relevant data through a qualitative approach, which will then be presented per the facts found. To that end, researchers are required to have the ability to

evaluate data in depth. The qualitative data analysis technique in this study refers to the stages proposed by Miles and Huberman, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing/verifying conclusions (Pahleviannur dkk., 2022). These three stages are used to compile a comprehensive picture of the government's public relations communication strategy in utilizing social media as a means of building a positive image and two-way communication with the community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The public relations strategy of the West Bandung Regency Government through Instagram, particularly the @prokompim_kbb account, can be analyzed using the 4C approach (Context, Communication, Collaboration, Connection) introduced by Chris Heuer. This approach emphasizes the importance of effective content management, efficient communication, collaboration among stakeholders, and strong connections with the audience to build an optimal reputation for government agencies (Blakeman, 2023). In the Context stage, the ability to frame and present messages in an interesting way is crucial. In this context, the managers of the @prokompim_kbb account are required to create content that is not only informative but also capable of attracting the attention of the wider community. Presenting information embedded with viral trends, such as the use of popular music or interesting visual moments from regional leadership activities, is a proven effective strategy in triggering public interaction. Such content is usually packaged with narratives that highlight the positive results of government activities, while strengthening the image of leadership that is close to the community (Yasir dkk., 2020). The content production process requires high creativity from the editorial team, from taking pictures and videos to writing captions that are communicative and avoid controversy, such as hate speech or sensitive political issues. In addition, every piece of content featuring local leaders must go through an evaluation and approval process before being published.

Instagram is a highly strategic social media platform for disseminating government information due to its high visual reach. The number of Instagram users continues to increase across various age groups, including adults and the elderly, making it an effective tool for communicating government programs. Information disseminated through the @prokompim_kbb account includes the activities of regional leaders and officials, as well as the achievements of strategic programs. The public is not merely a passive observer but also actively participates by providing comments, criticism, suggestions, and other important information that serve as evaluation materials for the government. The Communication stage in the 4C concept emphasizes the importance of effective communication in strengthening the image of the local government. Good coordination among team members is crucial for the success of social media management. Each piece of content goes through several stages, including gathering materials, editing, discussing with leaders, and making improvements if necessary. Once approved, the narrative or caption is written. The use of appropriate and context-sensitive language is a major concern in the preparation of these narratives (Lee dkk., 2021). Once all aspects have been confirmed, a strategic posting time is determined, considering that the @prokompim_kbb account is capable of posting 4 to 5 pieces of content every day. The

frequency of posts is also adjusted to the ongoing government activities. Audience segmentation is also an important part of the communication strategy.

Based on data, the @prokompim_kbb account has 26,200 followers with a diverse age group. The 18-24 age group, who are mostly students, prefer light-hearted content that is informative and entertaining. The 25-34 age group tends to be more critical and meticulous in evaluating government policies. Meanwhile, the 35-44 age group is more selective in providing feedback. The age group above 45 shows lower participation due to limited social media usage. This indicates that Instagram can be an efficient medium for conveying information to productive and tech-savvy age groups. This segmentation is used to tailor the content delivery style to ensure it reaches the target audience effectively. During the Collaboration phase, collaboration between the Protocol and Leadership Communication (Prokompim) with regional apparatus and village governments is a key element in expanding the reach of information. All activities involving regional apparatus must be coordinated with the administrator of the @prokompim_kbb account. This collaboration allows uploaded content to have a broader impact as it receives support from various social media accounts owned by regional apparatus. Statistical data shows a significant increase in account reach, from 1,880,000 in January to 30,777,000 in February, with non-follower interactions reaching 19,200,000 and followers totaling 11,400,000. This proves the effectiveness of an information distribution strategy that involves various parties to reach a wider audience. This collaboration is strengthened by a WhatsApp group consisting of administrators of regional and village Instagram accounts. In this group, information and content are actively shared and discussed. Every post on the @prokompim_kbb account will be disseminated by all regional administrators through the “story” feature, and vice versa.

This practice has become a mutually beneficial strategy, strengthening information dissemination while enhancing interaction with the public. Additionally, Prokompim conducts technical training sessions with expert speakers in documentation to enhance the capacity of social media administrators in managing Instagram accounts professionally. This approach not only strengthens inter-agency connections but also improves the quality of public communication through digital media. In the Connection phase, the relationships established between Prokompim and regional agencies and villages are maintained through regular communication and continuous cooperation. This is done not only to maintain existing relationships but also to ensure that public communication remains relevant and effective. One of the steps taken is to establish a social media-based coordination system, enabling quick and efficient information exchange. Every activity of the regional head involving Prokompim is packaged into interesting content, often interspersed with humor, so that it can reach a wider audience and generate positive responses from the community. Content that shows the closeness of leaders to the community, such as field activities or visits to certain areas, often receives interactive responses from followers. Some comments even contain important information, such as requests for road repairs or suggestions for government programs.

This proves that the @prokompim_kbb account is not only a means of image building, but also a two-way communication channel between the government and the community.

This communication allows the government to respond to the needs of the community more quickly and accurately.

The function of public relations (PR) in this context is vital, as PR plays a role in building a positive image of the government and maintaining public trust (Wismans dkk., 2021). Through social media such as Instagram, public relations can establish direct communication with the public without intermediaries, provide real-time information, and shape positive public perceptions of government performance. The existence of the @prokompim_kbb account is proof that local governments can utilize social media to build close relationships with their citizens. The success of the @prokompim_kbb Instagram account can also be seen from the quality of the interactions it generates. A post featuring the activities of the regional head, which was packaged interestingly, received 5,461,000 views, 122 likes, and 9 comments. Some comments contained jokes from the public, but some expressed complaints about the infrastructure. This shows that this account is not only a place for the public to appreciate the government's performance, but also a space for them to express their aspirations directly. Thus, the social media management strategy implemented by the Public Relations Office of West Bandung Regency through its Instagram account @prokompim_kbb, analyzed using Chris Heuer's 4C framework, demonstrates high effectiveness in building a positive government image, expanding information reach, and fostering meaningful two-way communication with the public. This approach can serve as a model for other local government social media management efforts aiming to enhance public communication quality in the current digital era.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data, information, and documentation gathered, the following points summarize the importance of context, communication, collaboration, and connection in managing the Instagram account @prokompim_kbb under the Protocol and Leadership Communication (Prokompim) of West Bandung Regency. First, understanding the context is crucial in crafting effective messages. The use of engaging language and captivating narratives in captions plays a significant role in capturing the audience's attention. Additionally, the visual appeal of the content is equally important to ensure that the posted material resonates with the public and encourages interaction. Second, communication is a critical step before uploading content. Each post undergoes several stages, including material collection, content editing, and the creation of a written script or caption. The final version is discussed with and approved by the leadership. Only after approval is the timing for publication determined and the post uploaded. This systematic process ensures accuracy and alignment with institutional values. Third, the Prokompim team collaborates actively with Instagram admins from various regional apparatuses, including at the village level. This collaboration ensures segmented and widespread dissemination of information. The coordinated effort has proven effective, as evidenced by a consistent increase in audience reach and engagement metrics every month. Fourth, maintaining connections is facilitated through a WhatsApp group formed by Prokompim that includes all regional and village-level Instagram admins. Prokompim also holds regular coordination meetings and provides technical guidance by inviting expert

speakers. These efforts strengthen internal communication and enhance digital media capabilities. Through these strategies, the West Bandung Regency Government, via Prokompim, is successfully enhancing its public image. By creating varied, engaging, and non-monotonous content, the initiative fosters a stronger connection with the community and encourages meaningful interactions in the comments section.

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