

Utilization of WhatsApp Social Media in Building an Organizational Communication Climate for ITMI (Indonesian Muslim Blind Association)

Dita Megahidayah^{1*}, Rosalia Prismarini Nurdiarti², Yeni Febrianty³
Communication Studies, Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Dita Megahidayah ditamegahidayah9597@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This research explains the use of WhatsApp social media in building the ITMI Organizational Communication Climate in Bekasi Regency. This research contains a problem formulation. How is WhatsApp Social Media Used in Building the ITMI Organizational Communication Climate? Then the aim of this research is to find out how WhatsApp social media is used in building the ITMI organizational communication climate so that a good quality of life can be created for individuals in organizational life. This research is qualitative research using the constructivist paradigm method. The data sources used are primary data sources, namely three informants and secondary data in the form of books, journals, and so on. The research results show that the use of social media to build ITMI's organizational communication climate is carried out in two ways, first by obtaining and sharing information using appropriate social media platforms, and secondly, coordinating and maintaining good relationships in a structured way using social media.

INTRODUCTION

Communication media in today's modern era allows people all over the world to be able to communicate with each other, this is possible because of the existence of various media (*Channel*) which can be used as a means to convey various messages. Types of social media include *facebook, path, instagram, whatsapp, line* and so on is one of the social media that can be efficient to reach a large audience. Because social media plays an important role in communication science in general and in mass communication science in particular. Social media is a process of interaction between individuals by creating, sharing, Exchange

and modifying ideas or ideas in the form of virtual communication or in a network.

One of the most widely used media to utilize is Whatsapp. Whatsapp is a product of *new media* in the form of an application that can be used to interact with various people around the world using text messages, calls, media, voice, and video in a simple, easy, and flexible way. The use of social media has penetrated in most levels of society and groups, both as government officials, businessmen, traders, students, students, and so on.

The Indonesian Muslim Blind Association (ITMI) is a community organization that gathers Muslim blind people to get fighting for their lives socially in the unitary territory of the State of Indonesia. This organization was established in the post-reform period, where this organization stood independently as a container for accommodating and channeling the aspirations of the Muslim visually impaired, as well as to be able to strengthen the Islamic ukuwah among the visually impaired which began to be eroded by the times. Linguistically, the blind consists of two words, namely tuna which means damaged, injured, lacking or not having while blind means eye. If interpreted, then blind means blind or lacking in terms of vision. This Thomson explained that the visually impaired are individuals who experience total or partial blindness. Technically, a blind person is a person who has a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the best eye after correcting it with glasses, or a visual acuity of more than 20/200, but whose visual acuity is narrowed in such a way that it forms an angle of view of less than 20 degrees.

The main character of the ITMI organization is based on Islam, which bases its ideology on the Qur'an and as-Sunnah. ITMI as an organization engaged in the socio-religious field, has an important role for the Islamic visually impaired throughout Indonesia and several other regions. As in the Bekasi Regency area in particular, precisely located at Perum Tridaya Indah 2 Block B7 No 12 Sumber Jaya Village, South Tambun District, Bekasi. In carrying out its work programs and activities, the Indonesian Muslim Blind Association (ITMI) does various ways and also uses various media. One of the media he uses is social media. There are several social media at ITMI such as Whatsapp, google meet for management. In some cases internal activities in the form of Islamic Religious Guidance, teleconferencing via telephone lines is still considered more effective, on the grounds that the sound quality is clear and good and there are few interruptions, so that it can make them stick with this option, namely by

telephone line. The quality of the telephone connection is still the same even though the number of users can reach more than 20 people.

The problem that arises is how the visually impaired use various social media to be able to socialize or adapt themselves in communicating with other people in general. The research conducted by this author aims to find out how the organizational communication climate in the development, the role of ITMI and also the community's response to the existence of ITMI in their area. The approach used in this study is a social history approach, which aims to be able to explore, discover, express and be able to understand the values or meanings contained in past sources.

The author is interested in conducting research on the ITMI organization of Bekasi Regency, which is located at Perum Tridaya Indah 2 Block B7 No 12 Sumber Jaya Village, Tambun Selatan District, Bekasi with the theme of Utilizing Whatsapp Social Media in Building the Organizational Climate of ITMI (Indonesian Muslim Association for the Blind) on the grounds that ITMI Bekasi Regency, although it has not been established for a long time, is able to run the organization well, whether the ITMI organizational program can be achieved by using social media, how obstacles or problems arise and what solutions are made for it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The utilization is an activity, action, process, or action that makes something useful. The terminology of utilization comes from the root word benefit which means benefit that gets a suffix *pe-an* which means the process or act of utilizing. Meanwhile, social media is a medium used to expand human social interaction through the internet and web technology. So it can be concluded that the use of social media is an effort to make social media useful. In practice, social media users use social media platforms to help meet their needs, both positive and negative, for example as a realm of information exchange, learning, entertainment, and even quarrel. And in essence, social media will be very helpful in various aspects of life today.

The use of social media currently plays a significant role, whether for personal interests, business needs or organizational goals. In terms of personal use, the use of social media is usually like a media of friendship, a medium for sharing information, for entertainment media and as a means of self-actualization in socializing its users and can also be for business purposes. Meanwhile, from the commercial side, the use of social media as an interest for business is inevitable.

The description above gives an idea that social media is a means of communication that can be used as a place to find information and its use requires media literacy skills where the cycle is like this *source > sharing > connecting > receiver*. Therefore, the following process is needed:

1. Source: The meaning of the word source in English means source. It is often referred to as the sender. Informants who send information and ensure that the information reaches the recipient need and go through two stages, namely sharing and connecting.

2. Sharing: The meaning of the word sharing in English means sharing. Sharing is known here as sharing without any space and time. This method can also be used as a continuous flow of communication to achieve goals from start to finish.
3. Connecting: The meaning of the word connect in English means connected. Connected in the process to carry out further re-examination, there are two things, namely monitoring and testing so that the presence and absence of weaknesses can be known to prepare for improvement.
4. Receiver: The meaning of the word receiver in English means receiver. This part can be called the end of a finishing process or the final stage of planning to be carried out. And the recipient is the end of the initial process starting from the recipient of the source, sharing, and connecting. In addition, it is the receiving end of a communication channel.

Whatsapp is a product of *new media* in the form of an application that can be used to interact with various people around the world using text messages, calls, media, voice, and video in a simple, easy, and flexible way. The use of the name *WhatsApp* comes from the phrase 'What's Up' as a greeting language in asking how things are doing. *WhatsApp* was founded by Jan Koum and Brian Action. In 2014 *WhatsApp* merged with *Facebook*, but operated separately as an app focused on serving quick and easy messaging exchanges. *WhatsApp* is designed to make it easy for its users to stay connected and communicate anytime, anywhere. *WhatsApp* provides a variety of features for its users by sending messages and making calls simply, securely, and quickly to various types of phones around the world. Initially, *WhatsApp* was launched as an alternative to SMS. But currently the *WhatsApp* social media application can be used to send and receive various kinds of media in the form of text, photos, videos, documents, locations, even *WhatsApp* can currently be used to make voice calls and video calls. Messages and calls using *WhatsApp* can be secured with *end-to-end* encryption, so no third party including *WhatsApp* can read the messages or hear the calls of its users.

Communication is one of the important, yet complex things in human social life. This is because humans are greatly influenced by the communication they have with other humans, both with people they already know and with people they don't know at all. Meanwhile, in the opinion of Kenneth and Gary as quoted by Umar, communication is defined as the delivery of information between two or more people which also includes the exchange of various information between humans and machines. Communication is a process of exchanging information between two or more people through sentences, pictures, numbers, and can also be through emotions or feelings, with the aim of changing behavior, shaping the behavior of others. The importance of communication for human beings is undeniable, as well as for an association or an organization. With good communication, an organization can run smoothly and successfully, and vice versa, the lack of communication or the absence of communication at all, an organization can be hampered, jammed or messy so that its programs cannot be implemented.

Communication in an organization is a process to create and exchange messages in a network of interconnected relationships, communities to be able

to overcome an uncertain environment or an ever-changing environment. According to Wiryanto, organizational communication is the sending and receiving of various organizational messages in formal and informal groups from a particular organization.

The term organizational climate was first used by Kurt Lewin in the 1930s when he tried to relate human behavior to his environment. In the study, Lewin introduced the term 'atmosphere'. In later developments, the term "atmosphere" introduced by Lewin was abandoned and replaced with the term *organizational climate*, and the term organizational climate was often confused with other terms such as "*organizational personality*" and even the general term "*organizational situation*" and according to James and Jones. "*Organizational situation*" can be said to tend to "obscure" the concept of organizational climate.

In addition, organizational climate is also defined by Bowditch "as a broad measure of people's expectations of the things they like in the organization they are encountering". So that the organizational climate can function as an indicator of whether or not the expectations of these employees are met in the organization. Other opinions about organizational climate according to Schneider Organizational climate is the employee's perception of practices, procedures, and types of behavior that are rewarded and supported in a particular setting. Furthermore, Steers said that the organizational climate is related to perception because this climate is a climate that is seen and felt by the members of the organization and not the actual climate and Steers also said that a pleasant climate is a climate that benefits the needs of individuals. For example, paying attention to the interests of employees can lead to the realization of a level of behavior to achieve organizational goals. Then Stinger defines organizational climate as "a collection and pattern of the environment that determines the emergence of motivation and focuses on perceptions that are reasonable or can be assessed so that they have a direct influence on the performance of organizational members" then Wirawan defines "Organizational climate is the perception of organizational members individually or in groups and they are in constant contact with the organization regarding what exists or occurs in the environment Internal organization routinely affects the attitude and behavior of the organization and the performance of the members of the organization which then determines the performance of the organization.

Organizational climate is influenced by almost everything that happens in an organization so that the formation of an organizational climate is greatly influenced by all behaviors in the organization. Climate is the end product of the behavior of a group of people in an organization. The organizational climate can also be seen as the personality of the organization because the characteristics of the work environment are only felt and affect the behavior of the members in it and the organizational climate is formed because of the activities in the organization.

In an organization, communication is very important as a support for the success of the goals of the program that has been determined. Communication can bring together various managerial functions, and communication is also necessary to define and disseminate organizational goals. Communication is also

necessary in developing an organization's plan to achieve the goals that have been determined. Apart from that, it is also to manage human resources and other resources in the most effective and efficient way possible. Communication also functions to select, develop and assess each member of an organization. In terms of leading, directing, motivating and creating an atmosphere where people want to contribute, of course, it must be with good communication, and lastly that communication is important to supervise in the implementation of a project or work.

METHODOLOGY

The research method is basically a scientific way to be able to obtain data with a certain purpose and use. Based on this, there are at least four keywords that must be considered, namely scientific methods, data and objectives and uses. This qualitative research method includes the view of constructivism, assuming that reality has a plural and interactive dimension. It can also be interpreted as an effort to exchange social experiences that can be defined through various results of research. In other words, qualitative research has the assumption that the truth is dynamic and can be found through the study of the individual through interaction or through social situations.

This constructivism paradigm is a paradigm approaching the understanding of antithesis to an understanding that can place the importance of observation and objectivity in finding a reality over a science. Ontologically, this school of constructivism states that reality exists in various forms of mental construction that are fundamental to various social experiences, which are local and specific, and also depend on the various parties of the actors. Constructivism paradigm

This view that social science is interpreted as a systematic analysis of "socially meaningful action" through direct observation of several social actors in natural conditions, in order to understand and interpret how these social actors can create and maintain the social world itself.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this case, the researcher conducts an analysis based on information, data, facts, and also what has been obtained directly while in the field, then processed and developed into a series of discussions. This stage of data analysis was carried out in order to find out more about the process and things done by the ITMI community in an effort to utilize social media to build a communication climate for the ITMI organization, where the researcher applied the theory of using social media Uses and gratifications by (Elihu Katz, Jay Blummer, Michael Gurevitch).

1. Utilization of Whatsapp social media by ITMI

The Indonesian Muslim Blind Association (ITMI) is a national-level community organization, which gathers Muslim Blind and people who care about the struggle of the Muslim Blind in the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, which carries out the mission of da'wah and tarbiyah among the Visually Impaired. ITMI was formed as a forum for struggle to realize a more prosperous, advanced, independent, fair, inclusive, vulnerable and discrimination-free life for Indonesian Muslim

Blind who have noble character, and dignity and always have faith and fear in Allah SWT. in accordance with the guidance of the Prophet PBUH. As an organization, ITMI develops various ways to carry out predetermined programs, one of the ways is by using Whatsapp social media which is a product of new media. The use of WhatsApp began in 2019, on July 30, 2019 to be precise. The use of WhatsApp is based on public activities that are restricted due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Initially, the members who joined actively used WhatsApp 30 people. Because some other members must adjust to the features of WhatsApp by using audio. Members who use WhatsApp as social media are increasing along with the adjustment of their devices. Currently, there are 70 ITMI members who are actively using WhatsApp as a medium for activities.

2. Building the communication climate of the ITMI organization

The organizational communication climate is a function of activities in the organization in order to show members that the organization trusts the members and gives them freedom in determining their attitudes, encouraging and giving them enthusiasm and motivation to carry out activities, and appreciating every activity and results that have been made. By focusing on developing a positive communication climate through the use of social media, ITMI can increase member engagement and satisfaction, and also create an organizational environment that upholds loyalty, as well as solidarity.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of research conducted at ITMI Bekasi Regency regarding the Utilization of Whatsapp Social Media in Building a Communication Climate of the ITMI Organization (Indonesian Muslim Association for the Blind), conclusions can be drawn in accordance with the formulation of the problem and the objectives of the research as follows:

1. The use of social media in building the ITMI organizational climate is carried out using the *source > sharing > connecting > receiver* cycle, which can be grouped into two points, namely:

a. Obtaining and sharing information

In terms of obtaining and sharing information, all ITMI members use Whatsapp social media to obtain and share the information obtained. The information submitted can be formal or non-formal. Some are conveyed in writing, while others are conveyed orally through *voicenotes*. Information about the activity is conveyed clearly and in detail so that it can be understood by all. Information from the management is routinely conveyed, some are conditional according to the urgency of interests.

b. Coordinating and maintaining good communication

The activities carried out by ITMI according to the program are of course always communicated with each other, so that they can run smoothly. Coordination is carried out starting from the stage of preparation for activities, implementation of activities and evaluation of activities.

Coordination is carried out based on the structural tasks that have been set.

2. The use of Whatsapp social media in building the communication climate of the ITMI organization

a. Belief

Process The formation of trust in ITMI begins with the coordination process through social media, namely with the formation of a committee in a meeting to make an activity by the ITMI committee, in this case all members trust the committee and the performance of the committee such as member who entrust the position of chairman of the committee, public relations, event sicies, and so on.

b. Co-decision-making

Collective decision-making by ITMI is done well through social media. This can of course increase the sense of responsibility among members.

c. Providing support

The provision of support through social media (*Online Support*) has a great influence on the spirit of organization by ITMI cadres. Support is needed in various ways, especially in an effort to make an activity a success. This is then applied by ITMI cadres to form a good organizational climate and maintain the quality of activities Openness is an honesty between members of the organization to information that is considered important for members, freedom, and ease of members in obtaining information through social media.

d. Attention and high performance through intense communication

From social media by ITMI members, it attracted the attention of members to care more and foster *a sense of belonging* in the organization. ITMI members also expected to give high performance to all activities carried out.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Advanced research on the utilization of WhatsApp social media in fostering the communication climate within ITMI Bekasi Regency suggests that while the platform effectively facilitates information exchange, coordination, trust-building, and decision-making, further enhancements could be made through strategic digital engagement frameworks. Leveraging AI-driven chatbots for automated updates, implementing structured discussion forums, and utilizing sentiment analysis tools could refine organizational communication, making it more interactive and data-driven. Additionally, integrating cloud-based collaboration tools alongside WhatsApp—such as Trello for task management or Google Drive for document sharing—could optimize coordination efficiency, ensuring seamless workflow execution. Research indicates that organizations utilizing multi-platform digital ecosystems exhibit higher levels of engagement, transparency, and performance efficiency, suggesting that ITMI could further strengthen its organizational climate by adopting an omnichannel communication strategy. Moreover, the psychological impact of online support networks within ITMI could be examined through computational social science methods, enabling deeper insights into how digital trust, collective decision-

making, and emotional reinforcement contribute to organizational cohesion and long-term sustainability in the digital era.

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