

American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research (AJHSSR)

e-ISSN :2378-703X

Volume-5, Issue-4, pp-10-16

www.ajhssr.com

Research Paper

Open Access

GROUP COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN ELECTION COMMITTEE IN SOCIALIZING 2019 ELECTIONS

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ABSTRACT: Understanding and involvement in the fulfillment of the rights and obligations as an Indonesian citizen, hopefully, will be one of the factors for a country's growth to become a better nation. Each person has its characteristics in receiving information so that transmitting information that is important to its people becomes a special task for the government. This study explores how the Bandar Seri Begawan Overseas Election Committee interacts with a party in Socializing the 2019 Elections. The method used as a semi-structured interview with internal and external informants in the collection techniques. A Qualitative approach is used to analyze the communication concept and strategy communication concept based on data collection consists of data collection, data simplification, data presentation, and conclusions. Based on the study results, four factors influence the process of group communication to run well, including Imitation Factors (Imitating), Suggestion Factors, Sympathy Factors, and Group Communication Media. Also, it is the use of group communication to the Indonesian citizen in Brunei Darussalam to deliver the information that is quite efficient based on the increase in 2019 election participants.

Keywords -Group Communication Theory, Strategy Communication, Socializing

I. INTRODUCTION

The direct presidential election in Indonesia which was held in 2004 was the beginning where the community was invited to participate in electing their leaders through a predetermined procedure. The Election in Indonesia is held every 5 years. Putri (2016) stated that the presidential election since 2004 until now shows that the level of community participation in the election in terms of the quantity of the population has increased relatively. Due to the importance of community participation, there are many ways that the successful team of each candidate can attract the hearts of the public. Supported by the rapid development of information technology, it makes it easier for Indonesians to find out what the candidates are doing, their track records, and what programs each candidate has to offer.

Koentjoro Poerbopranoto (in Pureklolon 2018, p. 64) defines democracy as a country whose government is held by the people. This means a system in which the people are included in the state government. In a democratic country, General Election (Pemilu) is one of the main pillars of a process of accumulating the will of the people. The election is also a democratic procedure for selecting leaders. It is believed that in most civilized societies on this earth, elections are the safest mechanism of power change (succession) when compared to other methods (Sardini, 2011, p. 1).

According to Putri (2016), the success of the election is certainly very much influenced by the level of political awareness of the citizens concerned. Low political participation generally arises because of apathy and a priori attitude towards political activities and activities, where people prefer to carry out their daily activities such as work, sports, social clubs, sightseeing, and so on, which are felt to provide a more tangible benefit than having to participate in politics. Another factor that is also closely related to political participation is the level of public education, where the higher the level of education of the community is usually directly proportional to their tendency to participate in politics (Putri, 2016).

According to Denhardt & Denhardt (in Semil, 2018, p. 121) information is a one-way relationship in which the government produces and provides information to citizens. This includes both "passive" access to the information upon request by citizens and "active" steps on requests by citizens and "active" measures for the government to disseminate information. In connection with this, information is also said to be data that has been

processed into a form that has meaning for the recipient and has real value or can be felt as a result of current or future actions or decisions (Jacob, 2012, p. 8).

The amount of information that is spread is one of the reasons for the efforts to make people move from abstaining to participate in determining the leaders who will lead the Indonesian nation. Election-related information can be provided in several ways, such as socializing, creating campaigns, and other activities. Not only are the candidates and their success teams socializing to introduce their program, but the General Election Commission (KPU) as the election organizer also carries out several activities.

In elections, communication has a very important role because communication is not only used by candidates who want to win the hearts of the people but is also used by election activity organizers in conveying information, as well as to people who use their voting rights. According to Nurudin (2016, pp. 66-67) communication in the political process can change the political order if it is not by society.

For Indonesian citizens (WNI) who live abroad, the election is held by the Overseas Election Committee (PPLN) which was formed to improve the quality of holding general elections that can guarantee the implementation of the political rights of the people. Therefore, in socializing the election, PPLN uses several strategies, given that the characteristics of Indonesian people living abroad are different, including Brunei Darussalam.

Mulyana (2014, p.33) says that communication that functions to inform or explain contains persuasive content. This type of communication is used by PPLN to convey the importance of participating in election activities. Therefore, an appropriate communication strategy is needed by the conditions of Brunei Darussalam. The strategy is planning and management to achieve a goal (Amirullah, 2015, p. 175). In choosing a strategy and structure for implementing it, managers must consider the influence of the external environment on the organization. Meanwhile, the communication strategy according to Effendy (Chotijah, 2018) is a mixture of communication planning and communication management to achieve the goals set.

Based on the pre-research conducted by the researcher, it was found that election participation in Brunei Darussalam was increasing every year. Every year, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) Bandar Seri Begawan and PPLN use different methods each year to socialize the election. Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam are known to tend to listen more and receive information through Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam. The following is the data on election participants in the year for 3 periods:

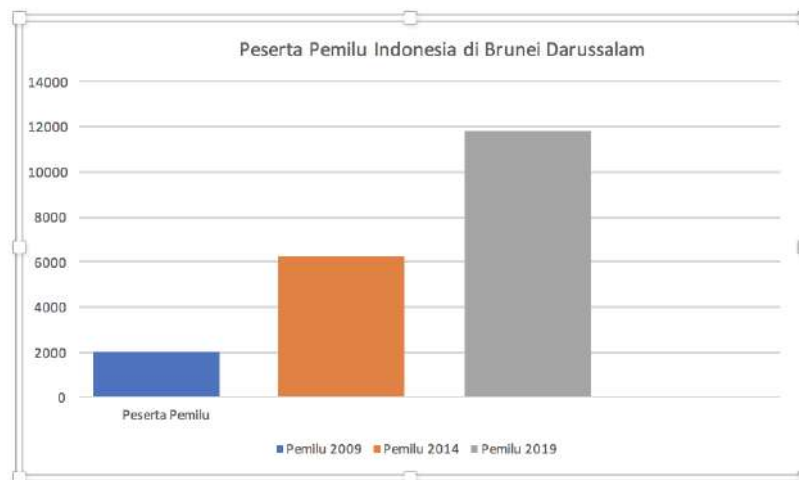


Figure 1. Data on Indonesian Election Participants in Brunei Darussalam, Internal Data, 2020.

Based on the explanation above, this article was conducted to find out the group communication process carried out by the Bandar Seri Begawan Overseas Election Committee (PPLN) in the 2019 Election Socialization.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Group Communication

Group communication is communication in small groups of people, to help develop ideas and even help to solve problems, both formally and informally (Rosmawaty, 2010, p. 86).

Meanwhile, according to Efendi (in Nofrima, 2017) Group communication is communication between a person (communicator) and several people (communicator) who gather together and form a group.

The two definitions of group communication above have in common, namely the existence of communication aimed at sharing information in the number of more than two people and having a certain arrangement of work plans to achieve group goals.

1. Factors Underlying People to Group Communication

According to (Rosmawaty, 2010) Group Communication put forward by a person is motivated by several factors, namely:

1.1 Imitation Factor (mimic)

Imitation is a response that is learned from the results of communication, interaction, and environmental influences, not innate. The desire to imitate is evident in the behavior of the children as they grow into adulthood. Starting from language, how to eat, how to communicate, how to dress, and so on. However, not all of these imitations are positive, on the other hand, imitation is also negative.

1.2. Suggestion Factors

The factor of the suggestions that a person receives from other people who have authority, high social prestige, or are experts in certain fields. He passes the behavior or customs of the other person without any consideration.

1.3. The sympathy factor

Sympathy is the feeling that someone is attracted to another person. This feeling of sympathy can arise suddenly or gradually. The main motivation that is created or formed because of sympathy is the urge to understand and want to work together. Thus, "mutual understanding" or mutual understanding can be achieved if there is sympathy.

1.4. Group Communication Media

The media in a group plays an important role in the activities carried out in a community group. Besides being used as a means of interacting and socializing, this media also functions as a forum for promoting all forms of activities that contain commercial values that are beneficial to the community.

2. Government Communications

According to Canel & Sanders (2013, p.1) "Governing involves constant exchanges of information and communication about policies, ideas, and decisions between governors and the governed".

This means that governance must always involve the exchange of information and communication about policies, ideas, and decisions between the governor and those in the government. In other words, government leaders must always communicate information to the public.

Communication Strategy

Strategy in communication is a way of managing the execution of communication operations to be successful. Communication strategy is essentially planning and management to achieve one goal. To achieve this goal, the strategy does not function as a road map that only shows directions, but must also show operational tactics (Abidin, 2015, p. 155).

1. The functions and objectives of the Communication Strategy

Pace, Paterson, and Dallas (in Effendy, 2013, p. 38) state three main objectives in implementing a communication strategy:

1.1 To Rescue Understanding

To give influence to the communicant through messages conveyed to achieve certain goals.

1.2. To Establish Acceptance

After the communicant receives and understands the message conveyed, the message needs to be confirmed in the communicant's mind to produce feedback that supports the achievement of communication goals.

1.3. To motive Action

Communication always gives understanding which is expected to influence the communicant following the wishes of the communicator.

Panitia Pemilihan Luar Negeri (PPLN)

Panitia Pemilihan Luar Negeri (PPLN) is an Election Organizing committee formed and supervised by the General Election Commission (KPU) in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in each region whose aim is to carry out and secure and be responsible for Election activities abroad.

Socializing

Socializing is a process in which a person acquires knowledge, abilities, and basics that make them able or unable to become members of a group. (Narwoko, in Gumilang, 2017).

III. RESEARCH METHODS

Communication is very crucial for social beings. Communication takes place when the communicator and the communicant have the same meaning/meaning (Roudhanah, 2019, p.57). Researchers used the concept

of group communication and communication strategy concept to answer research questions. Rosmawaty (2010) states that there are four factors behind group communication, namely the imitation factor, the suggestion factor, the sympathy factor, and the group communication media. Likewise the three main objectives of the communication strategy presented by Pace, Paterson, and Dallas, namely to rescue understanding, to establish acceptance, and to motive action (Effendy, 2013, p. 38).

This study uses qualitative research methods with interview methods as data collection techniques. Interviews were conducted with two people consisting of the Indonesian Embassy internally, namely Junius Akbar as the Implementation Technical Affairs Staff in the PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan Secretariat Staff in 2019 and an Indonesian citizen living in Brunei Darussalam, Hanafi Rustam (Personal Communication, 16 April 2020). The data was validated using data triangulation techniques.

IV. DISCUSSION

Group Communication on Elections in Brunei Darussalam

According to data from informants, factors are imitating that of the Indonesian people in Brunei Darussalam. This factor was carried out after the socialization through seminars. This imitating activity is because the community receives good information which leads to the participation of the public in election activities, whether they have previously participated in election activities or not. However, the data do not show that there are mimicking factors caused by imitating the behavior of others. Besides, individual awareness is also a factor that causes a person to participate in elections in Brunei Darussalam.

Apart from imitating factors, there is also a suggestion factor which is proven by the PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan which has the authority and power to build suggestions to the Indonesian people that elections are an important activity to participate in and are not difficult to carry out. Hanafi Rustam (Personal Communication, April 16, 2020) agrees with this opinion by stating that the Bandar Seri Begawan PPLN has informed well, and does not rule out some individuals giving suggestions to Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam regarding the importance and procedures of the election.

The sympathy factor arose after the seminar held by PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan. Based on Hanafi Rustam's explanation (Personal Communication, April 16, 2020), there is curiosity and a desire to understand information about the election. Apart from Hanafi Rustam (Personal Communication, 16 April 2020), Indra MasrikaLubis (Personal Communication, 30 July 2020) also said that he wanted to know the electoral system in Brunei and how it is different from the one in Indonesia. This indicates that Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam are enthusiastic about the 2019 election socialization activities. In delivering the seminar, PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan is claimed to have conveyed detailed information. Also, not only wanting to understand but also perceived understanding creates an impetus to do something so that a common understanding or "mutual understanding" can be achieved together.

As Rosmawaty said, the media plays a very important role in the activities carried out by a group because it acts as a means of interaction, socializing, as well as a forum for promoting activities that contain commercial values that are beneficial to the group/community. Junius Akbar (Personal Communication, April 16, 2020) said that over time, the use of online media as a means of promotion is increasingly being carried out. There is a difference between 2014 and 2019 wherein 2014 PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan only used Facebook and conventional circulation, while in 2019 the reach of online media usage was getting wider, such as the presence of Email, Whatsapp, Instagram, etc. Even so, online media was not fully used in the 2019 election. This is because the explanation through online media is no more detailed than the offline explanation, namely seminars. Even though the tools for conveying information have become more widespread, it is possible that the message conveyed by PPLN will not get a response from the recipient. According to the Chairperson of the Indonesian Community Association (PERMAI) in Brunei Darussalam, Hanafi Rustam (Personal Communication, April 16, 2020), Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam quite appreciate the development of the media carried out by PPLN in conveying information.

Not only a tool in disseminating information, the ability of individuals who convey information is also very influential in the absorption of information by participants, especially in the type of communication carried out face to face such as seminars. People who are selected to deliver the socialization are expected to be able to have a good dialogue, not only convey information but must be sure that the information conveyed has been well received by the public who attended the seminar. Based on the results of interviews with several sources, it is proven that the group communication media is a place and means for socializing, interacting, and specifically promoting all forms of activities and information for the group/community.

Communication Strategy Goals and Functions

The communication strategy carried out to convey information is expected to help build understanding to the communicant. Pace, Paterson, and Dallas (in Effendy, 2013, p.38) state that the communication strategy aims to influence the communicant through messages conveyed to achieve certain goals. Junius Akbar (Personal

Communication, April 16, 2020) said that the purpose of delivering this message was to convey information about the 2019 Election and achieve the target of 2019 election participants.

The first socialization that was carried out was about how they vote, how to register voters, or how they can register themselves online. Besides, there is also offline socialization by conducting seminars and distributing brochures. Junius Akbar (Personal Communication, 16 April 2020) said that the seminar was open to all Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam. So, even though the seminar was held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Indonesian citizens in other areas were also invited to attend the seminar. It can be concluded that the Bandar Seri Begawan PPLN has followed the procedures for delivering messages by the directions from the Central KPU. The information message conveyed is pursued in several ways and reaches not only Indonesian workers but also in collaboration with the Indonesian Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan to convey information on the importance of participating in the General Election to the superiors of Indonesian workers in Brunei Darussalam. Also, the even distribution of information is expected to be able to help deliver messages to build an understanding of the 2019 Election to every Indonesian citizen throughout Brunei Darussalam.

PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan does not provide information only once, but many times to make Indonesian citizens remember and do what the communicators expect. This was evidenced by Junius Akbar (Personal Communication, 16 April 2020) who said that Brunei Darussalam was divided into four districts, namely Brunei Muara, Tutong, Temburong, and Kuala Belait. Seminars are held in each district more than once. The chairman of PERMAI Brunei Darussalam for the 2018-2019 period said that he had attended several seminars but not all because they were also outside the region. To ensure that the Bandar Seri Begawan PPLN does deliver information more than once.

The PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan also used a unique method in making Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam remember the date the election was held. Among other things, is to wear a uniform with the date of the election on the back of the shirt used in each seminar and to carry out simulations in every seminar starting from the time the election participants arrive until the participants leave. PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan also invites the public to volunteer to become a polling station committee (TPS) and educate all the possibilities (Junius Akbar, Personal Communication, 16 April 2020). Dissemination of information through social media is also carried out not only by the organizers but also by Indonesian citizens who distribute via the Whatsapp application which is then passed on to other Indonesian citizens, as stated by Asri Okina Gunanti (Personal Communication, July 30, 2020). The purpose of the activities carried out by PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan is for the public to understand and participate in general election activities in 2019. Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam can be said to have welcomed the efforts of PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan when viewed from the response made by Indonesian citizens as stated by Asri Okina Gunanti. However, socialization conducted through social media received a fairly low response when compared to socialization through seminars.

In an activity or action, there must be a target that must be achieved. PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan through Junius Akbar (Personal Communication, April 16, 2020) said that the target desired by the organizers was achieved so that the strategy carried out by PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan can be said to be successfully implemented effectively, efficiently, and according to the characteristics of Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam. Junius Akbar (Personal Communication, 16 April 2020) said that every seminar in various regions has different targets. As in the Temburong area, the organizer's target was 150 people, but due to the enthusiasm of Indonesian citizens, the attendees reached 300 people. In Kuala Belait, the organizer's target was 200 people, but that target was exceeded by more than 200%. The climax was that the election participants in Brunei Darussalam exceeded the target set by PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan.

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that the Bandar Seri Begawan PPLN focuses on group communication with seminars rather than social media due to the small level of penetration. One of the reasons PPLN Brunei Darussalam conducted group communication in delivering information to the Indonesian people in Brunei Darussalam was because Brunei Darussalam was an absolute monarchy. An absolute monarchy system of government can be defined as the power is in the hands of the king completely. This makes the country of Brunei Darussalam not familiar with the electoral system, making it quite difficult to get free permission to carry out election-related activities in Brunei Darussalam. PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan can only convey complete information through the seminar. In addition to being able to carry out the questions and answer process directly if there are things that cannot be understood, the public is also shown directly how the picture of the process during the election activities takes place. Unfortunately, even though the PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan target was exceeded, there are still Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam who did not attend seminars or election activities.

Besides, the majority of Indonesian workers in Brunei Darussalam are domestic workers, drivers, or cooks. One of the conditions for contacting foreign workers in Brunei Darussalam is not using communication tools such as cellphones during working hours. This makes the delivery of information through social media ineffective because most Indonesians choose to meet other Indonesian communities during their working holidays. The seminar activities conducted by PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan can be said to be a place for holidays

and socializing with fellow Indonesians to unwind from work. It is proven that every seminar held by the community who attend tends to increase from the previous seminar participants. Unfortunately, some citizens of Brunei Darussalam do not know the democratic system, so there are some Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam who do not get permission to come to seminars and are only allowed to come during election activities only.

V. CONCLUSION

The concept of group communication according to Rosmawaty HP, four factors influence the process of group communication to run well, including Imitation Factors (imitating), Suggestion Factors, Sympathy Factors, and Group Communication Media. Besides, the concept of a Communication Strategy has functions and objectives, namely To Rescue Understanding, To Establish Acceptance, and To Motive Action. The Bandar Seri Begawan Overseas Election Committee (PPLN) uses group communication as the main communication in delivering the 2019 Election socialization to the Indonesian people in Brunei Darussalam. The main media used in using group communication are seminars. It is believed that PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan will be able to increase the participation of participants in the 2019 Election and deliver information about the election more optimally. Besides, PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan also uses brochures, social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Whatsapp group chat applications as well as merchandise with information on the 2019 Election as supporting media. Based on the explanation from the source, the personal desire to come to the seminar because the imitation factor was considered less strong but was supported by other factors that encouraged the speakers to participate in seminars and elections.

PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan has used the right strategy where the strategy is by the conditions and characteristics of Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam. By focusing on the functions and objectives of the communication strategy, the message to be conveyed is expected that the Indonesian people in Brunei Darussalam can receive, understand and have an effect on the initial objectives of the Bandar Seri Begawan PPLN in socializing the 2019 Election. Selection of group communication types by PPLN Bandar Seri Begawan This was due to the policies of the host country, namely Brunei Darussalam, in regulating the country so that group communication was considered the most effective and efficient strategy. This is evidenced by the level of participation of Indonesian citizens in Brunei Darussalam which has increased by 11.809 voters from the number of 18,215 registered election participants compared to the previous election in 2014 which was around 6,000 voters.

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