

A Qualitative Descriptive Study of Social Media as a Means of Exchanging Public Information on the @Jogmfs Twitter Account

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ABSTRACT

Social Media has become ubiquitous in society, with nearly everyone, regardless of their generation or background, having a presence on various platforms. This aligns with the reality that contemporary society already employs social media as a means to distribute knowledge. There is a consensus that social media facilitates rapid, accurate, and efficient work. Social media platforms offer a rapid means of communication and information dissemination. The objective of this study is to ascertain the utilisation of Twitter, a specific form of social media, as a platform for the dissemination of public information through the Twitter account @Jogmfs. A menfess account is a specific sort of account that allows followers to send tweets automatically through the associated Twitter account. Additional followers are welcome to offer replies, reactions, or further inquiries. This study is a qualitative descriptive research that was conducted using data obtained from interviews and a survey of existing literature. This study uses Regina Luttrell's SoMe theory as a research instrument. The research findings indicate that individuals in Jogja who follow the Twitter account @jogmfs perceive Twitter as an efficient platform for exchanging information about Yogyakarta. However, it should be noted that in certain circumstances, irrelevant material is also transmitted through this Twitter account.

INTRODUCTION

Significant advances in science and technology have been made possible by the era of globalization. Internet access, which is a product of globalization, has now become an absolute necessity for all humans. Social media refers to the use of mobile and web-based technology that only requires an internet connection to facilitate interactive conversations. There are various reasons or motivations for media consumption, including obtaining information, entertainment, and self-expression (Abi Jaoude, 2020). This shows that individuals use social media for various reasons, aiming to fulfill those reasons and meet their needs.

Twitter is one of the most visited social media platforms today (Lwin, 2020). The presence of Twitter enables individuals to share their experiences and observations as they wish. Twitter also allows users to engage in conversations without being hindered by space. Twitter provides convenience for its users, as does the Twitter account @jogmfs, which is one of the confession accounts (menfess) for Yogyakarta.

Menfess is a combination of the words "mention" and "confess." Menfess is commonly used to refer to the activity of sending anonymous secret messages through Twitter. These secret messages typically contain expressions related to anything, often mentioning specific individuals (Zulfikar, 2022). The Twitter confession account @jogmfs provides information or content related to Yogyakarta. The advantage of the Twitter account @jogmfs compared to other accounts is its open-forum basis, utilizing a feature known as the auto-post feature. Users can share content, exchange information, share experiences, ask about the schedule of an event, and other matters related to Yogyakarta. User interest in the Twitter account @jogmfs is also quite high today, as evidenced by the fact that the Twitter account @jogmfs had approximately 61,300 followers as of May 29, 2023. This is supported by the fact that this type of confession-based Twitter account is something that makes it very easy for Twitter users.

This study uses the concept of The Circular Model of SOME (SOME Model) by Regina Luttrell. The Circular Model of SOME is a model created by Regina Luttrell to facilitate understanding of the aspects encountered in using social media (Regina Luttrell, 2015). Luttrell mentions several stages or aspects that need to be considered in managing social media, including, Share, in this case, communicators must have a strategy in using social media and determine which media to use so that communication can run effectively. Optimize, which is optimizing the messages to be conveyed through social media. Manage, which is how communicators manage social media properly and appropriately. Engage, which is involving audiences and influencers in social media management, a very important component in social media strategies. This research is a novel study that aims to understand how social media is used as a medium for public information exchange on the Twitter account @jogmfs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Twitter is an online social networking service and microblogging platform that allows its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters. However, on November 7, 2017, this limit was increased to 280

characters, referred to as tweets. Twitter has become extremely popular in Indonesia (Normawati, 2021). Jack Dorsey founded Twitter in March 2006, and the social networking site went live in July. From the beginning, Twitter has been one of the ten most popular websites on the Internet and has been labeled "the SMS of the Internet." Twitter experienced exponential growth and quickly gained global popularity.

Due to its immense popularity, Twitter is used for various purposes, including as a medium for protests, political campaigns, learning tools, and emergency communication. People's habit of expressing their opinions on social media, particularly Twitter, in response to events or issues in their surroundings can serve as a reference for determining public attitudes towards their environment or city, in the form of criticism or suggestions. However, Twitter also faces numerous challenges and controversies, including user security and privacy issues, lawsuits, and censorship.

The emergence of new media has also led to changes in how people communicate. The way individuals interact with one another is significantly influenced by new media, including the Internet. The Internet fulfills the need for communication and problem-solving, facilitating global communication and serving as an unlimited source of information.

Thus, new media can be defined as media formed through human interaction with computers and, specifically, the Internet (Vivian, 2012). This category includes websites, blogs, online social networks, forums, and other platforms accessed through personal computers or smartphones. New media play a fundamental role in bridging the wide gap between the public and private spheres, between the world of life and systems or organizations. New media also drive social change, as users are more engaged, flexible, and information-rich.

According to the Circular Model of SOME for Social Communication developed by Regina Luttrell, social media consists of four elements: share, optimize, manage, and engage. Although each aspect has its own strength, combining them allows practitioners to develop a robust approach. The model is circular because social media represent an ever-evolving conversation. Organizations can share, manage, engage, and optimize their messages simultaneously. Regina Luttrell explains the Circular Model of SOME in her book on social media as follows (Luttrell, 2015):

Share

In such situations, communicators must understand how to use social media, including all the platforms utilized, to ensure effective communication. It is important to note that efforts to disseminate messages require active engagement within social media itself. Organizations and institutions should leverage social media, but it is not advisable to activate social media accounts carelessly.

This is because social media must incorporate elements of sharing to enable the public to connect with one another, regardless of the roles they play. Consequently, public trust will be established when individuals take the

initiative to share specific messages about a particular issue. This approach will also result in a broader network of information.

It is crucial to understand the unique features of each social media platform, as they serve different purposes and target specific audiences. Since activation should not be arbitrary, it depends entirely on which audience is to be engaged and the actual purpose presented. Social media should be used according to its intended function. At present, Luttrell emphasizes three key aspects to focus on: participation, connection, and trust- building.

a) Participate

Organizations should actively participate in communicating with their followers and creating social media content to convey messages effectively. Strategies include understanding the audience, adhering to platform norms, maintaining authenticity, and leveraging existing conversations.

b) Connect

This involves building relationships with social media followers and encouraging them to share the organization's posts.

c) Build Trust

Trust-building is crucial, as followers need to perceive the organization as reliable. Strategies include having a clear profile, maintaining a consistent voice, and managing relationships effectively.

Optimize

Since each social media platform has different features, it is essential to optimize the messages conveyed through them. Regina Luttrell argues that, at this optimization stage, organizations must understand what the public is discussing regarding the published topic, listen and learn, and participate in authentic communication. When a subject shares a message, their followers will talk about the subject, whether by engaging directly or not.

a) Listen and Learn

It is a way to observe, listen to, and learn from audience discussions about a specific topic on social media. When using social media to distribute content, organizations must pay attention to what their followers are talking about and contribute to building relevant facts. By doing so, organizations can enhance ideas and concepts to create well-distributed content.

b) Take Part in Authentic Conversations

At this point, it is crucial to initiate two-way communication, where companies are included in real-time conversations with people. This allows users to talk, debate, and collaborate with others on a platform that can be seen, heard, and understood by millions. Therefore, an organization or company must listen to, understand, and learn from what their followers are saying. Additionally, they must anticipate or prepare actions related to these discussions. It is unsurprising that Luttrell emphasizes the importance of actively participating in conveying information about relevant topics, whether directly impacting the subject or indirectly related issues. Luttrell suggests that organizations should

have specialized tools to track public opinions developing on social media. An organization may observe ongoing public discussions by using tools such as mentions or hashtags.

Manage

How a communicator manages social media is the management stage. This is because discussions on social media often occur quickly. Organizations must be able to respond quickly, as the public also expects a fast response from the organization in question. In the management stage, Luttrell defines activities such as media monitoring, quick responses, and real-time interaction.

a) Media Monitoring

This refers to conducting research, surveillance, and evaluation of relevant developments. Media monitoring is done systematically and continuously. In the previous stage, the subject must already be aware of what the public is discussing on social media. Therefore, Luttrell recommends continuing media monitoring activities to better understand the issue. If possible, subjects should first be classified to allow for appropriate follow-up planning. However, quick responses are crucial in social communication because followers' opinions can change within seconds in social media communication. Even more importantly, real-time interaction is also necessary to prevent negative opinions from spreading too widely and quickly. There are also online tools that can serve as dashboards for communicating via social media; some even have settings for auto-replies.

b) Quick Response

A quick response means replying to comments sent to their social media, not through an app. To build a stronger emotional bond with followers, it is important to act quickly. However, its implementation will vary and be adjusted to the organization's identity, as some conversations should be responded to directly in formal and polite language, while others can be answered indirectly with a more casual or informal tone.

c) Real-time Interaction

In this example, we will look at how subjects interact in real-time on social media, such as engaging in live discussions, answering questions, and conversing with the audience. The goal is to increase the interest of other readers and ensure that the content shared reappears on their timelines.

Engage

Engaging in social media management and involving the audience and influencers is an important part of a social media strategy. According to Regina Luttrell's explanation in her book about social media, Engage: who is involved and how? Do we want customers to see what we share? If so, what do we expect them to do? Although managing an engagement strategy is a challenge, organizations can build benefits from proper engagement.

METHODOLOGY

This study conducts qualitative research, which produces descriptive data in the form of behaviors or written or spoken words from the subjects. Descriptive research is a research method that describes all data or the state of the subject or object being studied, then analyzes and compares it with the current situation in an attempt to solve problems and provide new information that is useful for the advancement of knowledge. Descriptive research can also be widely applied to various issues. This study focuses on the Twitter account @jogmfs as the research subject, and data analysis is obtained through literature review, observation, and interviews.

RESEARCH RESULTS

This study uses The Circular Model of Some by Luttrell (2015). There are four main aspects used in this model, each strong in its own position, but together they allow practitioners to develop solid strategies related to media issues. Furthermore, this study also gathers information from informants through interviews. The main reason this model was developed is that social media is an evolving conversational medium, so every individual on social media must continuously adapt to the developments.

Based on the interviews conducted, followers of the Twitter account @jogmfs, represented by the informants in the interview, stated that the @jogmfs Twitter account applies the four aspects of The Circular Model of Some in its social media management process, including:

Share

In the share aspect, Twitter @jogmfs uses social media as a means of sharing information and news between the people of Yogyakarta by using bots for menfess (anonymous confessions) or automatic tweets. Certainly, in terms of content, images, and videos shared by the followers of the @jogmfs Twitter account, they are attention-grabbing and receive a lot of feedback. Additionally, the @jogmfs Twitter account also frequently shares and posts threads or menfess in the public space of Twitter. Based on the interviews, it was found that the @jogmfs Twitter account, according to informant 1 when asked about the target audience of the @jogmfs Twitter account, said, "Yes, definitely the people of Yogyakarta," and similarly, informant 2 said, "Probably the people of Yogyakarta because the account is focused on this area." Both informants' statements are clearly reasonable, as the name of the @jogmfs Twitter account indicates that this menfess account focuses only on the scope or region of Yogyakarta, so the purpose of sharing information and updates revolves around what is happening in Yogyakarta.

On the other hand, informant 3 added a new perspective to this question by saying, "Definitely the people of Yogyakarta, but it seems that most of them are Gen-Z or Millennials." Generation Z and Millennials are the generations most closely connected to the use of social media technology, so it is not surprising that they become the main target indicator of the "share" aspect in the @jogmfs Twitter account. Furthermore, both of these generations tend to

actively share their daily activities, as can be seen from the overall content of the @jogmfs Twitter account.



Figure 1. Interaction of the @jogmfs Twitter account

In the end, all forms of questions related to daily activities, tourist spots, restaurants, and similar topics. Clearly, these are forms of public information that align with the name and function of the @jogmfs Twitter account itself as a means of exchanging public information. And in this indicator, it is proven that the @jogmfs Twitter account fully fulfills the share function in The Circular Model of Some.

In the same indicator space, the researcher also posed several additional questions about where the content of the @jogmfs Twitter account is generally shared, and the types of questions frequently asked by followers of the @jogmfs Twitter account through the menfess bot. Informant 1 stated that they follow the content of the @jogmfs Twitter account through Twitter as the main source and said, "varied (questions), from trivial to complicated, I'd say." Meanwhile, informant 2 added, "(questions) are many, some ask about places to eat, places to hang out, coffee spots, and so on." Both statements reveal the fact that the @jogmfs Twitter account is essentially not much different from other city menfess accounts, where the shared topics mainly revolve around the scope of Yogyakarta.

Meanwhile, informant 3 revealed, "I happen to be an active user, usually the questions are about culinary spots, the hours of tourist attractions, or trivial things like daily activities, and sometimes even personal confessions." The explanation from informant 3 differs slightly compared to the previous two informants, where it was mentioned that the @jogmfs Twitter account is also

used by its followers as a place to vent or share personal issues and ask for opinions from others.



Figure 2. The Form of Menfess on the Twitter Account

Optimize

In the optimize aspect, the @jogmfs Twitter account categorizes the types of content that can be shared and also has rules for submitting menfess, so that the question-and-answer interactions on the Twitter account can be optimized. Informants feel that this could be better if accounts that do not meet the requirements for submitting menfess could be blocked directly. Informant 1 clearly stated that, on some occasions, the information shared is very random or even not suitable for public sharing, saying, "It should be more organized, because sometimes the topics are too random." From this explanation, the researcher believes that for optimization, the role of the admin of the @jogmfs Twitter account is crucial in enforcing stricter rules and screening followers who can send messages as menfess.

Informant 1 also added, "Strange accounts that post irrelevant stuff should be blocked from the start." The reality on the @jogmfs Twitter account is that on several occasions, there have been accounts that send questions or tweets that are unrelated to information about Yogyakarta. Informant 1 hopes that such accounts can be blocked because they are disruptive.



Figure 3. Menfess considered irrelevant

On the same note, informant 2 also stated that they have no issues using and receiving information from the @jogmfs Twitter account, but they feel disturbed by some accounts, saying, "The accounts that like to ask for things or seek attention, those should be minimized and the rules for submitting menfess should be tightened." From this statement, it can be understood that the @jogmfs Twitter account needs to optimize the information that followers can share through the auto-bot to remain relevant to the context and scope of the @jogmfs Twitter account.

Meanwhile, informant 3 said, "I think by controlling what can be asked or what information can be shared, recently there have been many irrelevant posts. Menfess is public space, so it should be more open, but still firm in the rules." In daily posts, the @jogmfs menfess shares a variety of information, all of which can be accessed by the public. Informant 3 feels that the opportunity for optimization could begin by strictly regulating which automatic posts can be shared in the public space.

Manage

In the manage aspect, the @jogmfs Twitter account directly regulates which accounts can submit menfess, and the menfess submitted have separate Twitter accounts, keeping everything organized and tidy. Accounts that are proven to violate the rules or regulations of the @jogmfs Twitter account will be blocked. The informants agree that this Twitter account is well-managed and the admin is very responsive. Managing or overseeing a social media account is quite difficult; not all accounts on social media can be well-managed by their owners or admins. This especially concerns the timing of posts, responses to issues, advertisements displayed, and so on. In this management context, informant 1 said, "(the admin of @jogmfs) is good, I don't really know (about management), but it seems like there are too many menfess in one day, so it becomes less interesting."

Informant 1 explained that sometimes there is too much information shared in one day, causing it to pile up, making it very difficult to find relevant information or something the public is looking for. Therefore, the informant hopes that in the future, the management aspect of this Twitter account will improve, especially regarding the information shared and the number of posts in a day. Informant 2, with the same perspective on the management of the @jogmfs Twitter account, stated, "Yeah, the admin is nice and responsive, I haven't had any problems." This can also be proven by the fact that the admin of the @jogmfs Twitter account can be contacted directly if followers experience issues with information or the menfess submission process. Clearly, this is very helpful to the followers of this account and shows the seriousness of the admin of the @jogmfs Twitter account as someone directly involved in managing or overseeing this menfess account.



Figure 4. Bio of the Jogja Menfess Twitter account

Another perspective comes from informant 3, who stated that they have never had any issues with the @jogmfs Twitter menfess. Additionally, they added, "The management is good, so far there's never been a problem. Ads or paid promotions are also not too many." Most social media accounts today, especially Twitter accounts with many followers, often post ads or paid promotions repeatedly, which can be disruptive to followers. Furthermore, this also shows that, unlike other large Twitter accounts, the admin of the @jogmfs Twitter account manages the account as it should be used, namely as a public menfess account.

Engage

In the engage aspect, the @jogmfs Twitter account occasionally organizes events like massfollow-backs, giveaway posts, and others to build engagement. Interactions on the @jogmfs Twitter account are also very active and helpful to the people of Yogyakarta. In this aspect, the account's admin received praise from the informants, with informant 2, a new student, feeling that the presence of this account was very helpful for getting information while in Yogyakarta.

Similarly, informant 1 also felt that the @jogmfs Twitter admin is very responsive and willing to spend time with the followers, which helps build good relationships. Informant 1 said, "The admin often posts directly and responds to DMs, it's pretty good." Beyond that, the interview information also provided details that the followers of this account are also quite active in responding to posts, making the information received very diverse, as informant 1 explained, "It's very informative and helpful."

Informant 2, a student, also stated that the "engage" indicator on the @jogmfs Twitter account has been fulfilled, saying, "Yeah, this account really goes all out compared to other menfess accounts for Yogyakarta. It's really helpful, I'm a new student in Yogyakarta, so this account really helps." The relationship or social interaction between followers of the @jogmfs Twitter account in exchanging information is a good opportunity for the @jogmfs account to serve as an effective platform for public information exchange.

Finally, informant 3, when asked about the "engaging" indicator, answered, "I think yes, I also made some acquaintances with followers of @jogmfs, so we followed each other on our personal Twitter accounts. So the interaction is good. It's very good and informative (information), also helpful because generally the response is quick from the audience." This explanation

proves that the @jogmfs Twitter account provides a good platform for its followers to socialize and exchange information, thus fulfilling the "engage" aspect optimally.

Therefore, it can be understood that Twitter accounts are one of the most active social media platforms, widely used and favored by the public. As previously explained, the @jogmfs Twitter account is a menfess-type account, which allows its followers to ask and answer questions related to Yogyakarta, such as tourism, culinary, local events, and more.

Based on the interview results, it is clear that all four aspects of The Circular Model of Some can be found in the use of the @jogmfs Twitter account. The first aspect is share, where this Twitter account often shares relevant information about the city of Yogyakarta through menfess posts from its followers. The second aspect is Optimize, where the @jogmfs Twitter account, as a public platform, tries to optimize menfess usage by implementing fairly strict rules, including blocking users who violate the account's rules. This optimization aims to ensure that followers of the @jogmfs Twitter account feel more comfortable posting and that the shared information remains relevant to Yogyakarta.

On the other hand, the @jogmfs Twitter account still needs to improve its management, especially concerning accounts that often send menfess outside the context of Yogyakarta. Some followers feel disturbed by this, but overall, the @jogmfs account can be considered good in the management aspect, as the admin of the @jogmfs Twitter account is regarded as capable and highly responsive, according to the informants. The last aspect, engage, has been well fulfilled. The @jogmfs Twitter account is used simultaneously as a platform for sharing information, and the followers connect with each other. This is also proven by the fact that the @jogmfs account has helped informants make new acquaintances, and so on.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, several conclusions were drawn based on the practical use of the @jogmfs Twitter account as a public platform for information exchange. @jogmfs in this research was analyzed through four aspects of The Circular Model of Some, a theory related to social media management processes, including share, optimize, manage, and engage. Based on the interview data, it was found that @jogmfs functions well as a platform for public information exchange. The effectiveness of @jogmfs as a public platform is also supported by the fact that the number of followers continues to increase, as well as the activity or menfess interactions that take place within the @jogmfs Twitter community. Moreover, as a menfess account, @jogmfs has proven to be quite effective and plays a role as a secure information exchange platform, thanks to the available rules and the highly responsive admin in providing information about the @jogmfs Twitter account's operations.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research is expected to further explore this material

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