

Crisis Communication of Public Relations Nijisanji EN on Corporate Image (Content Analysis on Nijisanji EN's YouTube Account in Addressing the Case of Vtuber Selen Tatsuki's Dismissal)

Deva Mouliyana Devi^{1*}, Rila Setyansih^{2*}, Yeni Febrianti³

Communication Sciences, Mercu Buana University

Corresponding Author: Rila Setyansih, rila.s@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Crisis Communication, Nijisanji, Analysis Content, SCCT

Received : 3, January

Revised : 17, January

Accepted: 31, January

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ABSTRACT

A crisis is an unpredictable phenomenon that can arise from internal company issues, such as the case of Selen's dismissal by Nijisanji, which operates under Anycolor Inc. This dismissal triggered various reactions from the fan community, ranging from support for Selen to criticism of Nijisanji's management policies. The primary cause of this dismissal was the internal dispute between Selen and Nijisanji. In examining this issue, the author employs qualitative descriptive research with a content analysis method. The qualitative content analysis method allows for flexibility in data collection related to the case under study. By using content analysis and Situational Crisis Communication Theory, the author aims to study how Nijisanji EN responds to crises. The results of this study indicate that the crisis experienced by Nijisanji EN falls into the category of a Preventable Crisis. The conclusion drawn is that the management's inability to control Nijisanji's crisis communication response led to the company suffering significant losses due to a series of crucial and difficult-to-manage crises.

INTRODUCTION

Anycolor Inc, is a company engaged in entertainment, especially in the field of vtuber (Virtual Youtuber) which is labeled as Nijisanji. Nijisanji itself already has many branches, namely JP and EN. Nijisanji is one of the big and famous projects among anime lovers in Indonesia. The Nijisanji label is fully committed to supporting the needs of Vtubers from its talents, generally such as 2D models, media for Face Rigging, and many more. Of course, this advantage is obtained from agreeing to the contract that will be carried out. Usually, every agency or label will conduct an open audition to get their Vtuber talent. Virtual Youtuber or can also be called Youtuber Maya is a streamer who uses two-dimensional or three-dimensional characters processed by computer graphics and actively participates in using social media. Vtubers are often described as idols for their fans. This is because the ability that a vtuber must have, namely entertaining his viewers whose portrayal is like an idol. In the world of Vtuber itself, quitting this activity is usually called a Graduate. Just like Vtubers under the umbrella of labels, talent vtubers will be given the option to graduate or extend their contracts. However, if the talent violates the contract, the talent will be dismissed from his position or his abusive language that we call fired.

Nijisanji itself is a Vtuber company that is quite famous among the public. A few years ago, Nijisanji opened their label branch in Indonesia under the name Nijisanji ID and after that followed by their Korean label with the name Nijisanji KR. However, in 2022, these two branches were finally merged into an overall label, namely Nijisanji, which means that the talents remain under the auspices of the agency but do not use ID or KR labels anymore. One year after this incident, Nijisanji announced a mass graduation of former talent Nijisanji ID which caused a lot of sadness among fans and disappointment due to the sudden announcement. After this big incident, Nijisanji also had time to break contracts or fire some of their talents from the Nijisanji EN label. One of the talents whose contract was terminated at the beginning of this year is Selen Tatsuki, who is one of the second-generation talents from the Nijisanji EN label. Selen's dismissal raised many questions and impressions that seemed negative in the eyes of fans. This is because Selen is one of the famous talents and has a good impression in the eyes of fans. The statement issued in the letter announcing Selen's dismissal which was considered to include unusual information and Nijisanji's PR response which invited a lot of attention from fans. The above problems became quite long and had a big impact on the decline in shares and the image of the company Anycolor Inc. which declined drastically. Nijisanji himself often uses his social media to share information about his talents, one of which is Twitter. Twitter is a social media that is indeed very famous and widely used by Vtubers or Vtuber companies themselves. Therefore, Twitter is a very important medium for Vtubers. The dismissal letter or information regarding the termination of Selen Tatsuki's contract was uploaded on Nijisanji EN's main social media on February 5, 2024. In the post, information about the reason why Nijisanji EN had to unilaterally terminate the contract was due to the breach of contract committed by Selen Tatsuki while under the auspices of the Vtuber agency and the misuse of social media owned by him. In the letter, it was stated that the Tweet he made

on December 25, 2023 had tarnished the good name of Nijisanji EN or Anycolor Inc. The Tweet contained the following words:

“Hello, I apologize but management has private the song. Please feel free to reupload since a lot of money and effort was done by so many dragoon. I’m really sad that this happened on christmas but I hope somehow you guys will still be able to listen to it in some way.”

This tweet refers to the cover music video that was upload by Selen which has not been private for 24 hours, due to *miscommunication* and licensing problems with the party concerned. Vtuber under the auspices of the agency has indeed been provided with all its needs, including the social media used, so this is also still under the authority of the agency. So Nijisanji EN said that Selen's management of social media had been wrong and brought misleading assumptions to the agency, as well as releasing Selen's dismissal letter.



Figure 1Selen's Dismissal Letter

Nijisanji EN received a lot of feedback from fans. Starting from a sad response to some fans who felt awkward and angry due to the contract termination letter issued by Nijisanji. Fans think that there is nonsensical and messy information. Even though in the previous talent contract termination letter, it did not contain this much information and even only contained a short and non-verbose message. The reason is that after this unilateral dismissal incident, which reaped a lot of negative responses from fans. Nijisanji EN has received a lot of negative impacts and bad reputation related to the company's image which ended up growing a crisis in Nijisanji and the core company, namely Anycolor Inc. Such as a drastic decline in shares, Nijisanji also received many messages of hate speech, boycotts and mass unsubscribing from fans and several companies terminated contracts with Nijisanji related to the cooperation that has been carried out and will be carried out. This is due to the many

disappointments related to the unilateral dismissal carried out by Nijisanji on Selen. The deviant facts and testimony from Selen herself who used her personal Vtuber account before becoming a talent Nijisanji reaped cons from fans.

The crisis that occurred in Nijisanji EN is one type of crisis, namely, Preventable Cluster. Preventable Cluster was introduced by Coombs, this type of crisis has a great impact and the reason for the crisis that occurs is due to work accidents that occur due to Human Error.

Human error here means mistakes made by humans, this happens accidentally and cannot be predicted so that the company does not have preparation when a crisis occurs, as a result the company tends to take the wrong choice of strategy or response given to the public. This type of Nijisanji EN case regarding Selen has a great match with the type of crisis mentioned. The reason is that the failure of the Public Relations team in responding or processing data to solve problems has a bad impact on the company that creates problems such as declining shares, unsubscribing channels, and terminating contracts from other stakeholders.

Basically, a public relations person is a figure who has a great obligation in an organization or agency. Because this profession plays an important role in building and bridging professional and non-professional relationships. The existence of communication built by public relations with the public will create harmony and obtain the goals to be achieved. In this case, PR plays a very important role in informing the public of information. The existence of irregularities made by PR will have a big impact on the company's image.

This means that it is very big for agencies with the help of their PR to be able to improve their image or improve their image. Touching on one's own image is indeed very necessary for individuals, organizations and agencies. By using or packaging information from interesting messages, of course, it can improve the image which will definitely increase public trust. In addition, a PR person also often intersects with crises, such as handling crises in the company.

Crises are very common in various fields such as politicians, businesses, and society. Existing crises have the opportunity to come from internal, external, intentional or unintentional. In responding to the crisis itself, sometimes there are agencies and organizations that are indeed ready and not ready, so that they can encounter further cases. The crisis itself can threaten the image and have a big impact on the economy of the company. Therefore, Public Relations (PR) has important power in dealing with problems or crises.

In handling a crisis, a public relations person must handle the case using clear crisis communication. According to Sellnow, communication in crisis management is the most important element in facing, responding, and finding solutions in overcoming crisis situations in agencies. In dealing with a crisis, it is necessary to have good crisis management, the inability of an organization or agency to deal with a crisis due to poor and inappropriate communication. This can worsen the situation, damage the reputation (image), and increase the great negative impact on the agency. Proper and successful crisis management will result in a mature and responsive communication strategy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nijisanji EN, an entertainment label from Japan that is headed by the company Anycolor Inc. In the case of the unilateral dismissal of Selen Tatsuki by Nijisanji EN, a crisis has arisen. A crisis can destroy a company, but a crisis also does not only come from outside the company but also from within the company. The researcher explored the analysis of the content of crisis communication content carried out by Nijisanji in related cases, using the Situational Crisis Communication Theory on the image of the Nijisanji EN company.

1. Peran Public Relation

The role of a public relations person is to be a mediator in conveying information either from agencies or organizations to the public. Of course, the information conveyed must be packaged well and easily digested so that it does not cause missed communication. The arrival of a crisis, especially a crisis that does require great responsibility, will require proper handling. This is where a public relations person has a great influence in handling a crisis.

Public relations crises usually come from within the company itself. One of them is the crisis of controversial statements, which are statements that can cause pro and con responses to the public. The pros and cons that arise can have a significant impact on the company.

2. Teori Situational Crisis Communication Theory

This theory leads to reactions in crisis response strategies and reactions from the public, to agencies when a crisis takes place. Crisis response has a profound effect on how people view the reputation of an organization or company in a crisis, the strategies chosen (effective or not) and their behavior towards the organization after the crisis, because the crisis itself is a threat to the reputation of an organization or company. This theory emphasizes three types of primary crisis response strategies and one type of secondary crisis response strategy, namely, Deny, Diminish, Rebuild, and Bolstering.

- a. Deny this strategy is classified as a cunning strategy because it has a negative impact by cornering others, it is not uncommon for this crisis response strategy to worsen the crisis situation in the company. This crisis response strategy is divided into three tactics, namely:
 - Denial is a tactic that describes a company that avoids a crisis by providing information that the company is not experiencing the crisis.
 - Attack the Accuser . The accuser said here is the person who triggered the crisis in the company.
 - Scapegoat or scapegoating someone to take responsibility for the crisis. This tactic is the most cunning of the two tactics already mentioned.
- b. Diminish, this response strategy is a type that plays more information from the crisis that occurs. Information around the crisis is packaged in such a way that it can be used with minimal impact for the company. This strategy is divided into 2 types, namely:

- Excuse, the company uses tactics by providing information that the actions that have been taken are unintentional to trigger a crisis.
 - Justification, this tactic describes how the company handles the crisis by informing that the crisis does not have a significant adverse impact on the company, whether it is implicit or explicit.
- c. Rebuild, Rebuild or rebuild is the easiest and most common crisis response strategy used by companies. Unlike previous crisis response strategies, this strategy describes companies that have received a crisis that has occurred. This strategy is divided into:
- Compensation. From the name alone, it must be known that there are parties who are harmed by the crisis that occurred.
 - Apology, as the name suggests, this tactic must be familiar to the general public. Even in everyday life, if you make a mistake, there must be an apology to correct it.
- d. Bolstering, Bolstering is a crisis response strategy that supports the strategy that has been described above. This strategy is only used when necessary, so not many companies do use this crisis response strategy. This strategy is divided into:
- Remainder, here the company can try to remind the public about the good things that have been done by the company.
 - Ingratiation, slightly different from the previous tactic, in this tactic the company will be more inclined to good relations between stakeholders and the public.
 - Victimage, this tactic is different from the previous two tactics
3. Image
- Image is an important aspect for a company. This is a benchmark for how good and bad the company is. It is not uncommon for a bad image to destroy a company slowly or instantly.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses descriptive qualitative research with a content analysis method. The content analysis research method is a research technique that looks at data not from the actual state of a phenomenon but from texts, images, and expressions that are indeed to be seen, read, given ideas and form an image to clarify the meaning of these aspects, and must be analyzed with the researcher's thoughts.⁷ From the above understanding, this content analysis method is the right method to be used to dismantle the content or message of the content (video, audio, images, and text) that were studied. This method was chosen by the author because the author wanted to dissect the communication of the Public Relations crisis from Nijisanji EN's social media in the face of the dismissal case of Vtuber Selen Tatsuki. The researcher will go deeper and explore all the communication carried out by PR Nijisanji EN and evaluate the content and responses given.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Content Analysis (Standard)

The case of Selen's dismissal by Nijisanji highlights an important aspect in the entertainment industry, especially Vtubers, which has grown rapidly in recent years. This issue has been a major spotlight in the Vtuber community, including fans and industry observers. The existence of this case opens up all the shortcomings that exist in Nijisanji, ranging from the complexity of the company's relationship with talent, internal policies, and expectations of the company's work behavior.

a. Identification

From the description of the Selen Tatsuki crisis, the crisis faced by Nijisanji is included in the Preventable Cluster. This type of crisis was introduced by Coombs. Preventable accidents include accidents caused by human error, product damage and organizational errors. Crises, if handled with the wrong response, will bring havoc to the company. According to the author's vision, the PR management team from Nijisanji must be more sensitive and aware of the crisis that occurs. It should be noted that crises should not be underestimated by companies, because the bigger the crisis, the more difficult it will be to control and have a big impact on the company.

b. Evaluation

The dismissal of Selen carried out by Nijisanji provides an understanding of the importance of maintaining the company's internal relations with professional ethics while paying attention to relations with the public. This dismissal case also affected the outline of Nijisanji's internal dynamics, both from employee morale to talent management strategies or liver.

Although the steps used by Nijisanji are intended to protect the company's reputation by maintaining a professional attitude, it is different from the minds of fans who eventually lose trust so that loyalty to the brand must also be taken into account.

c. Valuation

Public assumptions about Selen's dismissal case show various speculations that lead to destruction image of the company. Many fans expressed great disappointment with Nijisanji's company management. Nijisanji's lack of clarity in providing explanations and controlling the crisis gave rise to wild assumptions that worsened the situation while strengthening fans' distrust of Nijisanji.

Situational Crisis Communication Theory

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory was used to analyze the case of Selen's dismissal by Nijisanji. With this theory, it can provide an understanding of how Nijisanji should handle this situation strategically with good crisis response and communication.

a. Deny (Attack the Accuser)



Figure 2 Live Stream Nijisan

Nijisanji Nijisanji attacked Selen using the Clarification Livestream on their first-generation Ellira liver channel. These three talents mentioned that the problem regarding Selen's dismissal was indeed purely from Selen himself. However, there are a lot of mistakes made by Nijisanji because they could not package their response properly using this strategy.

b. Diminish (Justification)



Figure 3 Letter from Nijisanji

Selen's dismissal itself did cause a lot of chaos in the world of Vtuber. Whether it's from fans, company observers, to stakeholders who have collaborated with Nijisanji. The crisis makes the situation in the company even more precarious and must be carefully controlled. Nijisanji must certainly do in-depth calculations to calm the public and related parties. However, Nijisanji was too careless and ended up using the wrong words of communication.

c. Rebuild (Apology)



Figure 4. Apology

After choosing the wrong crisis response strategy several times, Nijisanji finally chose the right strategy even though it was too late and had to be slapped by the negative impact of the previous response strategy. The rebuild response strategy is indeed a suitable strategy to relay a situation that is already too bad. By admitting the mistakes made by the company along with regret related to the actions that

triggered the crisis and ending with a sincere apology, Company 100 can slowly improve its relationship with the public. In terms of the purpose of this response strategy, it is to restore trust from the public.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examines the Nijisanji crisis through Nijisanji EN's Youtube social media content. This crisis is categorized as a Preventable Crisis because it comes from internal company error (human error). The impact was fatal to the company's image, including boycotts, mass unsubscriptions, and termination of contracts. Fans also protested in various ways, such as spam chats with the hashtag #SinkTheYacht. Nijisanji was wrong in choosing a crisis response strategy, namely Deny (Attack the Accuser) and Diminish (Justification), thus making the situation worse. Apology's new strategy at the end of the crisis was appropriate, but it was too late.

Nijisanji's failure to manage the crisis shows the weakness of the company's communication management. This led to huge losses and exacerbated the crisis. This case is an important lesson for Nijisanji to implement fair policies, effective and transparent communication, and improve crisis communication management in the future. Of the two response strategies that Nijisanji has failed to carry out, it has led to the destruction of Nijisanji's image. The final response strategy used to deal with this crisis is the most appropriate response strategy and in accordance with the type of crisis faced by Nijisanji.

Overall, the case of Selen's dismissal carried out by Nijisanji not only has an impact on the individual concerned, but also provides a lesson to the company on the importance of fair policies, namely awareness of the balance of business interests and employee welfare (talent), effective communication including transparency in communication with the public, and company management that must be improved, especially in crisis communication management.

FURTHER STUDY

Future research is expected to further explore this material.

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