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Social Media Skill in Public Relations and Customer Service for Employers

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ABSTRACT

Public relation is an important part of marketing activities that involves assessing or perceiving the general public's attitudes and views, as well as general and specific consumers (segments), toward a company's or product's activities and brand policies, and then carrying out the necessary activities to create a positive image. This goal can be achieved by using suitable media to complete customer satisfaction so that skills in utilizing social media are the main thing that public relations must do. This study aims to determine the ability to use social media by entrepreneurs such as university graduates when they start working. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The population in this study is Indonesian entrepreneurs. A survey of 396 entrepreneurs was chosen as the method. The findings show that public relations and customer service are the most sought-after social media skills among university graduates, ahead of knowledge of social media content creation, strategy development, and analytics.

Keywords: Social media skill, public relations, customer service, employers

ABSTRAK

Humas adalah bagian penting dari kegiatan pemasaran yang melibatkan penilaian atau persepsi sikap dan pandangan masyarakat umum, serta konsumen (segmen) umum dan khusus, terhadap kegiatan perusahaan atau produk dan kebijakan merek, dan kemudian melakukan kegiatan yang diperlukan untuk menciptakan citra positif. Tujuan tersebut dapat dicapai dengan menggunakan media yang sesuai untuk melengkapi kepuasan pelanggan sehingga keterampilan dalam memanfaatkan media sosial menjadi hal utama yang harus dilakukan oleh humas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kemampuan penggunaan media sosial oleh para pengusaha seperti lulusan universitas ketika mereka mulai bekerja. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah pengusaha Indonesia. Sebuah survei terhadap 396 pengusaha dipilih sebagai metode. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa hubungan masyarakat dan layanan pelanggan adalah keterampilan media sosial yang paling dicari di kalangan lulusan universitas, di atas pengetahuan tentang pembuatan konten media sosial, pengembangan strategi, dan analitik.

Kata Kunci: Keterampilan media sosial, hubungan masyarakat, pelayanan pelanggan, pengusaha

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INTRODUCTION

Today, almost every company has an employee in charge of the company's social media. The advancement of information technology causes societal transformation. The introduction of social media causes a shift in people's behavior patterns in terms of culture, ethics, and current conventions (Cahyono, 2016). In the middle of the numerous communication channels currently available, the Public Relations Government must select appropriate media for both the internal and external public. With an increasing number of individuals using the internet, communication via online media is becoming a more appealing option (Kurniasih, 2013). The way public relations practitioners do their jobs in terms of communicating with the public, both individually and corporately, has changed due to social media. To keep up with the growth of new technology, social media has become a challenge for practitioners to improve their technical and managerial talents. Practitioners continue to learn more about social media to maximize its use and assist the company in building a stronger relationship with the public (Pienrasmi, 2015). This situation underlines the importance of social media skills for public relations and the benefits derived by employers. Public relations must adapt to any changes, one of which is social media in the digital era. Likewise, an employer must adapt by implementing a new business strategy.

One of the fastest-growing mediums is social media. Around 70% of internet users in the globe are also social media users. Users of social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter (Anwar, 2017). Many areas, such as political campaign media, advertising, and education, are using social media as a new instrument to execute duties and activities. However, today's use of social media can have overbearing consequences that can lead to significant difficulties if not addressed as soon as feasible (Daniel Susilo, 2021). Some social media usage practices should be avoided, such as selfies, cyberbullying, and online shopping (Mulawarman & Nurfitri, 2017). In terms of digital activism, social media plays a significant role (Jamil & Eriyanto, 2021). Today's social media user behavior and false information are fascinating phenomena. Social media is the most successful vehicle for Hoax's acceptance and diffusion of knowledge. One element that makes it easier for them to disseminate information without going through the verification process is their diverse backgrounds of user behaviour (Rahadi, 2017).

Content, community, and Web 2.0 technology are the three factors that make up social media. Social media's growth will impact three areas: society, businesses, and the local environment (Ahlqvist et al., 2008). With the rapid expansion of knowledge, the public has access to technology that can assist them in various situations. With the availability of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter and mobile apps like WhatsApp and Line,

fake news and hate speech may spread quickly (Susilo et al., 2019; Yunus et al., 2019). Pre-filtering is not possible in the communication and information media (Palupi, 2019). Magazines, forums, the internet, weblogs, images, videos, ratings, and social bookmarking are all examples of technology-based social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), which can be used as a digital medium for public relations.

Well-managed digital public relations, including two-way interaction or communication with the public, also provide various information and answer almost all general questions. It is also informative and educative to answer group ambiguity (Mboeik et al., 2020). Digital media utilized in digital public relations methods include websites and social media. However, despite the increased adoption of digital media in government communications, some challenges remain, including a lack of supporting legislation and human resources with relevant skills (Kharisma & Agustina, 2019).

Previous research, such as social media usage, improves how employees connect (Dronen, 2014). The frequent use of social media can have a beneficial or harmful impact on its users. Social media has a good effect on employees by focusing more on the company's goals and turning tiny ideas into valuable insights (Lee, 2013). Furthermore, social media usage at work aids in the interaction of one employee with another (Dronen, 2014). The prolonged use of gadgets makes generation Y more able to apply internet usage than generation X, mainly social media (Gafni & Geri, 2013).

On the other hand, social media might make a person less focused. Furthermore, social media can cause a person to pay less attention to direct communication (face-to-face), be less able to communicate, not pay attention to the actual world, become more angry, impatient, self-centered, have changes in brain processes, and have decreased activity (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013; Chasombat, 2014). However, some previous studies related to social media in companies only discussed the impact. Still, none had examined social media skills in public relations and customer service for employers. This basis raises the objectives of this research, namely to find out the social media skills possessed by employers such as university graduates when they start working.

METHOD

This research uses cross-sectional surveys that give a snapshot of the population's characteristics and what's going on at any one time. They can be population-based by using random sampling in a survey (Endvawnow.org, 2020). Cross-sectional studies are observational and are referred to as descriptive studies rather than causal or relational

studies, which means they cannot be used to determine causation. Researchers take notes on what information is available in a population, but they don't change the factors. This form of study can be used to characterize the features of a community, but it cannot be used to establish causal correlations between variables. This strategy is frequently used to infer plausible links or to gather preliminary data to enable further research and experimentation.

This research is part of a larger project that employed a cross-sectional survey to target Indonesian Employers. Employers of university graduates are the only ones who are eligible. Therefore, databases of Indonesian university graduates from third parties Participants are recruited from employers who have the approval to receive communications such as online surveys. Four hundred and fifty people completed the study, with 29 determining that they were not in Indonesia and being eliminated. In the Indonesian sample, 25 of the 421 replies were incomplete. Thus, they were removed. The analysis includes 396 Indonesian questionnaires, with a 94.1 percent completion rate. Men made up 46.5 percent of the total, while women made up 53.5 percent. The participants were between 20 and 55 (M=42.78, SD=11.90). Table 1 has more demographic information. Retail and Consumer is the most represented industry in the sample, with more than a quarter of those who took part. Even though middle management is the most common professional level, about one-third of those took part.

Table 1. Demographic of Respondents

Industry/ Sector	%
Agriculture	10
Legal	12
Mining	22
Government	6
Manufacture	24
Telecommunication	17
Other	9%

Because the surveys used in earlier similar research did not separately address all of the specific topics explored. The data retrieval technique was explicitly built for this study using Survey Monkey. The design was based on the strengths and limitations of past research and was informed by a literature search that identified essential areas of interest (Freberg & Kim, 2018; Meacham & Ross, 2019; Benson et al., 2014). The variables in this study include

the areas of knowledge and social media skills that are believed to be the most important. The indicators include:

- o Public relations and customer service
- o Social media content production
- o Social media strategy
- o Social media analysis

Then, using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree, 7 = strongly disagree), Participants were asked to answer 22 questions about the domains mentioned above of social media knowledge and competencies. Finally, participants were asked to rate how much they agreed with a statement regarding specific graduate characteristics necessary for employment in their company or organization. For example, public relations and customer service are dealt with in seven elements. In contrast, social media content production is dealt with in six, social media content management is dealt with in five, and social media content management is dealt with in four.

Initially, descriptive statistics were used to assess the data. Then, a cluster analysis was used to find data patterns and groups of participants who agreed on graduation traits linked to social media abilities. Cluster analysis reveals which participants have a way, in this case, agreement, on a collection of variables, allowing subgroups of the sample to be identified (Bolin et al., 2014). Therefore, the group-based orientation approach makes it easier to investigate the discovered clusters further to see whether there are any relevant or distinct patterns among the groups (Bolin et al., 2014).

A two-step cluster analysis was utilized for each unique SM category to put individuals into multiple groups, resulting in four studies. We wanted to test if this affected cluster homogeneity, so we ranked the four SM skill categories in order of relevance. A two-step cluster analysis is utilized when the number of clusters is uncertain (Tkaczynski, 2017). Group comparisons are carried out after each set from the sample. A descriptive analysis was performed to explain the characteristics of each cluster. Independent t-tests (age) and cross-tabulation with contingency chi-square testing were used to evaluate different tests (gender, position level, and industry sector). For all analyses, the significance level was fixed at $p < .05$.

RESULTS

Some of the essential skills of university graduates are described by researchers in Table 2 below.

Table 2. The Most Crucial Skill of University Graduate

n=396	%
Social Media Strategies Management	12
Public Relations and Customer Service	50
Social Media Content Management	29
Social Media Analysis	9

Based on Table 2, it can be observed that the ranking of social media skills in public relations has been obtained based on importance. Public relations and customer service were ranked the most important with 50% results, followed by Social Media Content Management, with 29% results as the most important. Social Media Strategies Management with 12% results, and social media analytics with 9% results.

Skills in social media in public relations and customer service to bring up some of the specifications of the skills in it include 1) Issues and conflict management and resolution, 2) Relationship management, 3) Ethical, social media practices, 4) Customer service, 5) Marketing strategy.

Cluster one comprised 62.4 percent (n=247) of the sample, whereas Cluster two represented 37.6 percent (n=149) based on the consistency of responses to the seven statements about public relations and customer service. The silhouette separation has good cohesiveness (0.6), and the cluster size ratio is 1.66. According to predictor relevance, all of the questions had good prediction values of 0.69 to 1.0. Cluster one, on the other hand, highly agrees with all claims concerning public relations and customer service, but cluster two, on the other hand, firmly disagrees. Cluster comparison revealed a significant difference in age Cluster one (M=44.16, SD=11.61) is older than cluster two (M=40.79, SD=11.33), as shown by $t(394)=2.82$, $p=.005$. Gender was also a significant factor, $2=5.99$, $p=0.014$, with more women (58.30%) than men (41.70%) in group one and more men in group two. Group 2 disagrees that public relations and customer service skills are vital, with men (54.36%) outnumbering women (45.64%). There were no substantial variations between industries or levels of professional position.

DISCUSSION

According to the findings of this study, the most significant areas of social media skills for university graduate employers are public relations and customer service. Compared to other aspects of social media competence, public relations, and customer service skills, nearly half of the respondents said they were the most important (50 percent). Based on research conducted by Dronen (2014) that the use of social media in the workplace improves the way employees connect. In this study, ways to stay connected are carried out to manage and resolve problems and conflicts. The use of social media also brings about relationship management, management, and resolution of issues and disputes.

Due to its two-way symmetrical communication, to assist customer service operations, public relations should embrace social media as a tool for relationship management. Participatory customer service is necessary for successful social media customer service. Relationship management is carried out to find out the latest information about customers, ranging from complaints, product requests, and types of services that need to be improved. The sample's strong preference for public relations and customer service skills could suggest that, first and foremost, university-educated companies need employees who can connect with customers and positively represent their company on social media.

In addition, university graduates with a background in public relations, particularly those related to the media, are in dire need of strategic communication, reputation management, issues, and crisis management. Based on Lee's research (2013), the frequent use of social media can positively or negatively impact its users. Social media positively impacts employees by enabling them to focus more on company goals and turn small ideas into valuable insights. It is used in this study to implement ethics, social media practices, and customer service. This can be a valuable asset for businesses that can leverage this ability to communicate effectively with the public and stakeholders through social media more proactively and recognize and respond to issues and circumstances. When compared with other poll participants. Public relations and customer service are essential characteristics of social media expertise as more women, and older people are in the sample.

Furthermore, businesses hiring university graduates give them a lower priority on social media content management, strategy management, and social media analysis could reflect a lack of awareness of these areas and their benefits. In all other regions, save public relations and customer service, the sample was evenly split between agreeing and disagreeing. Only 9% of participants rated social media analysis as the most important, displaying a lack of understanding of the benefits of leveraging social media data to guide business operations such as continuous improvement.

Based on research conducted by Munene & Nyaribo (2013) and Chasombat (2014) shows that social media, on the other hand, may make a person less focused to the point of decreasing activity. So in this study, the effort made is to implement a marketing strategy so that the University must train graduates in public relations and social customer service. While a public relations college might focus on strategic communication, reputation and problem management, and crisis management, social customer service seems to be something that should be included as well.

Many professions and industries use social media. Understanding how to leverage this technology to serve, engage, and build human relationships with the public and stakeholders is no longer limited to marketing and public relations. Based on the research of Gafni & Geri (2013) that the use of gadgets for a long time makes proficiency in social media. At the same time, the results of this study Employers prefer graduates with this talent over those with other types of social media knowledge. So proficiency in using social media is an apparent demand for industry and students; it is now up to colleges to respond if they haven't already. As this research notes, this could include introducing the concepts of public relations and social customer service into higher-level courses. Students may take a series of core courses or offer a series of short-duration or online modules to prepare for industry standards.

Based on the results of the data obtained and reviewed from the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) Theory, technology does not determine human actions, but human actions themselves that shape technology. So the practice of public relations and customer service must take advantage of the primary social media that is run within the company. Given that digitalization demands that everything is fast-paced and responsive, every company must have skills in social media. These skills must, of course, be adjusted to the goals to be achieved. Because the focus in this study is more on public relations and customer service, social media actions are formed to be skilled in 1) Issues and conflict management and resolution, 2) Relationship management, 3) Ethical, social media practices, 4) Customer service, 5) Marketing strategy.

CONCLUSION

Social media expertise in public relations and customer service is becoming an essential and most significant characteristic for employers with university graduates. In addition, a university graduate with a background in public relations, particularly about the media, can be a valuable asset for a business. This is done by utilizing this ability to communicate effectively with the public and stakeholders more proactively. This condition provides an

opportunity for university graduates with expertise in social media to attract Employers to maximize business goals more efficiently by giving customers delighted by building public relations through social media. The novelty from this research can be a reference for employers and employees in preparing themselves and enriching their skills, especially for jobs related to public relations and customer service.

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