



The effectiveness of government public relation in Covid-19 era

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Received: 30 July 2021

Accepted: 07 August 2021

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32479/jeb1.11359>

ABSTRACT

The main goal of this study is to discover public opinion on public policy in the year after COVID-19 and how the public relations effort that was successful was achieved by the government. Using Drone Emprit Academic's publicly available data, this research analyzes the public sentiment using naive bayes. This study based on 3,609 tweets of the term "kebijakan publik" showed that the majority of public opinion is unfavorable, and accounts in the civil sector are the most active. The government's positive news may be overshadowed by other sources, making it a problem. The government should work with the public relations department to craft a strategy to raise the volume of social media use and to counteract bad news with good news.

Keywords: Naïve Bayes, Public Policy, COVID-19, Sentiment Analysis, Government Public Relation

1. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 pandemic could decrease not only the physical health of society but also cause mental illness. Montano & Acebes (2020) argue that the mental health consequences of pandemic stress are severe. The COVID-19 pandemic may increase the prevalence of common mental health issues, including sadness and anxiety. In addition, Taylor (2021) said that fear of SARS-CoV2 infection and fear of coming into contact with contaminated objects or surfaces are among the five components of the syndrome, along with fear of socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, fear of foreigners, compulsive checking, and reassurance-seeking, and pandemic-related traumatic stress syndrome. Moreover, Taylor et al. (2020) show that studies and clinical observations have shown that during a pandemic, many people will show signs of stress or anxiety, which could include feelings of fear regarding contracting a disease, of making contact with potentially contaminated surfaces, or of those who are foreign and might be carrying the infection (e.g., disease-related xenophobia) (e.g., nightmares, intrusive thoughts).

Based on those reasons, the role of government has risen since the government is one of the parts of society that could decrease society's stress. So that, the government should show the community that they have made public policies to handle the problem of COVID-19. Portela et al. (2020) has shown that personal data, especially sensitive data, has been a significant tool in public policies that deal with the pandemic. However, Ayuningtyas et al. (2021) said that policymakers must grapple with competing interests as they develop and execute public policy related to COVID-19. Negotiated, debated, and created inside a black box that disregards openness and other governance norms, thereby ensuring public policy goes unnoticed. Because of this, the public policy contains the viewpoint of policymakers, which may clash with the constitutional-based interests of the people and frequently contradicts them. Institutions that execute conflicting policies emerged during this period, which led to chaotic and disorganized organizations. This unclear policy position is almost certainly going to result in counter-productive behaviors, attitudes, and actions among individuals.

For those reasons, the government should have a good public relations unit that could increase the government's trust. Lee & Li (2021) argue that during the early stages of COVID-19, when information is increased by state governments and health institutions (such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), the results of an online survey of American citizens show that people trust their state governments and health institutes, which increases their perceived risks, behavioral control, and subjective norms. In addition, several of the tools to make a good public relation are the website, blog, and social media. Hong (2013) argues that the ability of the government to answer citizens' questions and supply the public with information is often considered as a means of promoting democratic ideals and public trust in government.

2. METHOD

2.1. Overview

This research uses the data from Twitter which is crawled by an application built by Fahmi (2018), namely Drone Emprit Academic (DEA). The keywords used for crawling the data is "Kebijakan Publik"

2.2. Gathering Data

The conversation gathered by DEA is from 26 May 2021 to 14 August 2021. DEA uses the Application Program Interface of Twitter to get the data.

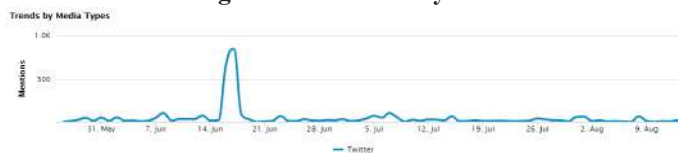
2.3. Data Analysis

This research follows data analysis done by (Rahmanti et al., 2021). Public opinion of "Kebijakan Publik" was investigated by looking at all processed tweets (including mentions, retweets, and replies). A DEA engine found the public attention by analyzing Twitter's word frequency and mood and determined that the primary emotions were positive, negative, or neutral. A DEA-sensing algorithm was developed using a machine learning method, and then probabilistic classifiers were used to interpret the results (Fahmi, 2017). The following classifier will identify if the classification approach will be utilizing Naïve Bayes (Adaptive Multiplicative Model) or Maximum Entropy (Laagu & Setyo Arifin, 2020). Although, the DEA classifiers' performance evaluation indicates that Naïve Bayes has a 90.26% accuracy. A visual map of Twitter conversations was also created using social network analysis.

3. RESULT

This research collected 3,609 mentions during the period. The most mentions were created on 16 June 2021 and 17 June 2021, as seen in figure 1.

Figure 1: Mentions by date



On 16 June 2021 and 17 June 2021, most of the mentions said negatively about public policy, as seen in figure 2 and figure 3 below.

Figure 2: Example of negative mention 1

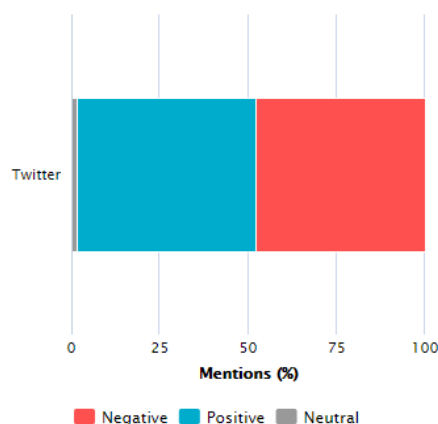
RT Di Indonesia, kebijakan publik itu nggak dibikin berdasarkan sains. Tapi, sesukanya orang yang punya kuasa. Semuanya bisa diveto kalau kebijakan gak sejalan dengan mau dan kenyamanan mereka. [RE slala_la]

Figure 3: Example of negative mention 2

RT Masyarakat nyampein keresahan/aspirasi langsung ditodong pertanyaan: "Lalu solusimu apa?" Mental2 begini nih yang bikin kualitas proses pembuatan kebijakan publik kita anjlok. Selalu dituntut loncat ke solusi. Padahal definisiin masalah aja belum kelar. [RE fchkautsar]

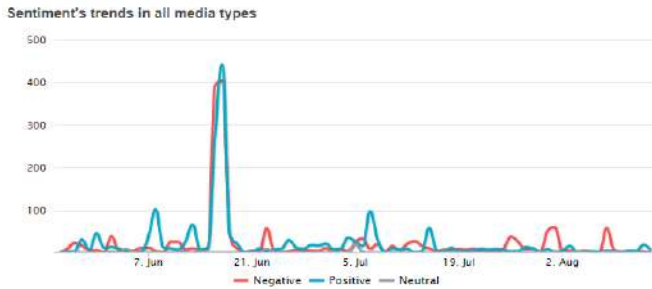
From 24 May 2021 to 14 August 2021, public sentiment about public policy is slightly balanced, as seen in figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Public Sentiment



However, in the sentiment analysis per date, we see that on 16 June 2021 and 17 June 2021, the sentiment was the balance between positive and negative, as seen in figure 5

Figure 5: Sentiment Trends



Nevertheless, in the detail of positive mention on 16 June 2021 and 17 June 2021, many mentions with negative tones grouped in positive sentiment as seen in figure 6.

Figure 6: False positive sentiment

17/Jun/2021 23:43 WIB

RT Di Indonesia, kebijakan publik itu nggak dibikin berdasarkan sains. Tapi, sesukanya orang yang punya kuasa. Semuanya bisa diveto kalau kebijakan gak sejalan dengan mau dan kenyamanan mereka. [RE slala_la]

Positive

Therefore, it could be concluded that the negative sentiments were understated, and the genuine negative sentiment could be more than reported.

Then, the top five most engaged users are non-government accounts, as seen in figure 7.

Figure 7: Top five most engaged users

Most Engaged Users	#RT + Reply
@slala_la	748
@fchkautsar	734
@msaid_didu	212
@faridgaban	147
@RachlanNashidik	97

Furthermore, when we see the most retweeted status, most of them have negative tones, as seen in figure 8.

Figure 8: Most retweeted status

Most Retweeted Status

Di Indonesia, kebijakan publik itu nggak dibikin berdasarkan sains. Tapi, sesukanya orang yang punya kuasa. Semuanya bisa diveto kalau kebijakan gak sejalan dengan mau dan kenyamanan mereka.
 16/Jun/2021 15:48 WIB [Graph](#)
 Retweeted: 742

Masyarakat nyampein keresahan/aspirasi langsung ditodong pertanyaan: "Lalu solusimu apa?" Mental2 begini nih yang bikin kualitas proses pembuatan kebijakan publik kita anjlok. Selalu dituntut loncat ke solusi. Padahal definisiin masalah aja belum kelar.
 15/Jun/2021 23:35 WIB [Graph](#)
 Retweeted: 734

Pak SBY dan Demokrat tak pernah memperlakukan kritik dan demo PDIP dulu sebagai aib, atau apalagi makar. Kami menerimanya sebagai partisipasi dalam ruang demokrasi untuk mendorong kebijakan publik semakin baik. Jadi apa masalahnya untuk mengingatkan itu? <https://t.co/R1mmWv7waa>
 31/Jul/2021 18:28 WIB [Graph](#)

Therefore, we could conclude that the society's sentiment of public policy is primarily negative

4. DISCUSSION

Based on the result above, we could see that the public's sentiment about public policy in the COVID-19 era is mostly negative. It is similar to several studies, such as Pristiyono et al. (2021), who found that most of public's sentiment about the vaccine is negative. Because the public was concerned that the vaccination was not safe, negative opinions about the vaccine emerged in that time period. So, in this pandemic era, the public's sentiment about something that the government does is primarily negative. It is a role of government public relations since the public relations unit should increase the positive tone in social media. It is essential to succeed government's programs, such as vaccination, social safety net, and so on.

In addition, if we see in the top five most engaged status. All of them are created by the non-governmental account. It could be a problem since the positive news created by the government could be covered by other accounts. So, most of the tweets seen by society are negative. For this problem, the public relations unit of government should make a strategy to be more active in social media and cover terrible news and opinion with good news and opinion. So, the trust in the government could be increased significantly.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research is to find the public sentiment about public policy in the COVID-19 era and how the successful of public relation campaign is done by the government. This study uses the data from Drone Emprit Academic using the naïve bayes method to analyze the public sentiment. Based on 3,609 mentions with the keyword “kebijakan publik”, this research found that most public sentiment is negative and the most engaged accounts are non-governmental accounts. Because other sources may outshine the good news generated by the government, it may be an issue. In this case, the government's public relations department should develop a plan to increase the frequency of social media activity and combat negative news with positive news.

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