

BEAUTY COMMUNITY GROUP COMMUNICATION 'BEAUTY CLASS JOGJA' IN CONDUCTING PRODUCT REVIEWS THROUGH THE WHATSAPP GROUP APPLICATION

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ABSTRACT

WhatsApp groups are one of the features of the WhatsApp application that allows users to communicate with more than two people at once while connected to the internet. This feature is used by the beauty community 'Beauty Class Jogja' as a group communication medium for product reviews. Therefore, this research aims to find out how the beauty community 'Beauty Class Jogja' group communication process in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application. In this study, the group communication process through the WhatsApp application will be studied using five elements of communication from Laswell and Group Achievement Theory by Ralph Stogdill. The study used a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques used are interviews, passive observation, and literature study. The result of this research is that the communication process of the BCJ group in conducting product reviews takes place through a group on the WhatsApp application, with the admin acting as a communicator and members as communicants. Messages are delivered via chat on the WhatsApp group application. To minimize errors in sending messages, the admin always gives members the freedom to ask questions and discuss so that the group communication process in product reviews runs smoothly.

Keywords: *Beauty class jogja, group achievement theory, group communication, product review, whatsapp group*

1. PREFACE

As social beings, humans always need other people to complement each other and communicate. Communication has the meaning of social interaction in which individuals use symbols or symbols to construct and interpret meaning in the environment around them [1]. Social interaction can happen to anyone, anywhere, and anytime, including in a group. According to Effendy, the communication process is divided into two, namely the primary communication process and the secondary communication process. The primary communication process is the process of delivering messages by the communicator to the communicant by using symbols as a medium or channel for delivering message content. Meanwhile, the secondary communication process is the process of delivering messages by the communicator to the communicant by using a tool as the second medium after using the symbol as the first medium. Communicators use the second medium in facilitating communication because the communicant is in a distant place or in large numbers. The second media can be letters, telephones, newspapers, television, and other information media. The process involves five elements of communication: communicators, messages, media, communicants, and effects [2]. Information and communication technology is constantly evolving along with the increasing human needs. Of course, this encourages the birth of new innovations that make human life more manageable. The rapid development of information and communication technology makes the internet the main communication tool in demand by the public. The internet as a communication tool utilizes various applications such as social media. According to Boyd, social media is a collection of software that allows individuals

and communities to gather, communicate, share, and in certain cases, collaborate. Examples of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Line, WhatsApp, and others.

Launching from the Liputan6.com news channel, WhatsApp is second in the social media most widely used by the Indonesian people. It is recorded that 83% or around 125 million Indonesians have used WhatsApp as a communication medium out of 150 million social media users in Indonesia [3] WhatsApp is a mobile chat application that makes it easy for users to keep in touch even though they are in different places as long as they are connected to the internet. WhatsApp also allows its users to communicate with more than two users at once through the WhatsApp group feature [4] This feature is used by a beauty community called Beauty Class Jogja as a group communication medium. Beauty Class Jogja (BCJ) is a beauty community that provides product review collaboration services with cosmetic brands in Indonesia where all group communication processes in conducting product reviews are held through groups on the WhatsApp application. The use of the WhatsApp group as a communication medium is to facilitate the communication process of the Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews. Apart from the Covid-19 pandemic, Beauty Class Jogja members are also not only domiciled in Yogyakarta, making it impossible to communicate directly (interview with Felinda Erinoka as the founder of BCJ, October 16, 2021). For this reason, the formulation of this study's problem is how the Beauty Community Beauty Class Jogja group communicates in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application. With the aim of research to find out how the communication process of the Beauty Community Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application.

Because the communication process of the Beauty Community Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application, the discussion of the communication process in this study is a secondary communication process which will be associated with five elements of communication according to Laswell, namely communicators, messages, media, communicants and effects [2]. Each group certainly has a goal to be achieved, which in the context of this research, the group's goal is to conduct a product review that will impact the formation of a good image of BCJ in the minds of the audience and the brand. For this reason, this research will also be studied using the group achievement theory by Ralph Stogdill. This theory assumes that the process of group occurrence starts from input to output through media variables in which there is still feedback in the process. According to this theory, three factors influence a group: input from members (input), media variables and group achievement (output). The input factor from members has three elements, namely social interaction, results of actions and expectations. The media variable has two elements, namely formal structure and role. Meanwhile, group achievement has three elements: productivity, morale and unity [5]

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research approach in this research is qualitative with case study method. The results of this study are expected to be able to describe and explain clearly the communication process of the Beauty Community Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application. The subjects of this study were members of Beauty Class Jogja with the following criteria: active in conducting product reviews through BCJ collaboration with a brand, ready, and had sufficient time to be interviewed. Meanwhile, the object of this research is the communication process of the Beauty Community Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application. Three data collection techniques are used, while the data in this study is divided into two, namely primary and secondary data.

Primary data is data that the author collects himself through interviews and passive observation. The interview was conducted by interviewing six sources consisting of the founder, admin, and active members of Beauty Class Jogja. Meanwhile, passive observation was carried out when the author became an observer in two product review project groups, between BCJ with the Azarine brand and BCJ with the Mineral Botanica brand. Meanwhile, secondary data is through a literature study which is data that has already been collected by other people outside the researcher [6]

To analyze the data using the flowchart technique by Miles and Huberman, in which the data that has been collected will be simplified so that the resulting data is sharper, concise and focused, which will make it easier for researchers to carry out further analysis processes. Furthermore, the data will be presented either in the form of a brief description, table or graph so that the researcher can get an overview of the data and can interpret and find the relationship between the data and the focus of the research conducted. The data that has been simplified and presented in the form of a brief description, table, or graph will be concluded as the last stage in data analysis.

For the data validity technique, the triangulation method is used. According to [7] there are three kinds of triangulation, namely technique, source, and time. In this study, technical triangulation was carried out using three data collection techniques: interviews, passive observation, and literature study. Source and time triangulation was carried out when the authors interviewed six different sources at different times.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings and discussions with the speakers, the authors classify the communication process of the Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application into two stages, namely:

(a) Stage 1 – Product Review Content Creation

Although BCJ has more than 100 active members, not all members participate in a project review. The brand determines the number of members involved in the project review in question. Members who are selected for a project review will be collected in groups on the WhatsApp application to facilitate the project review process. In a collaborative relationship, brand product reviews always send product briefs containing product knowledge, SOW, and posting timelines, to the concept of review content that members must make later. Usually, the brand will give a brief to the admin, and later the admin will give it to the selected members through a group on the WhatsApp application (can be seen in figure 1).

Figure 1

Screenshot of Admin Sending Product Briefs to Members



Source: Personal Documentation

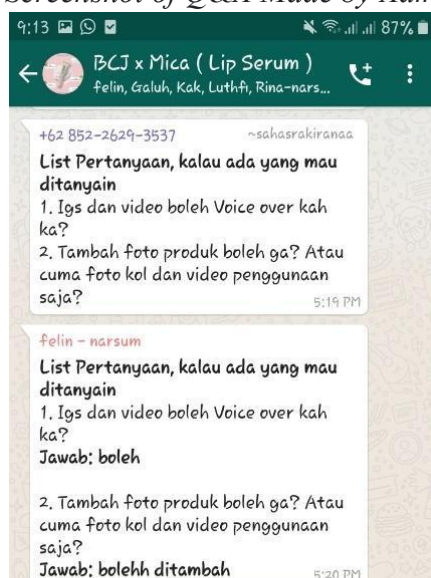
Admin also always reminds and controls members to try products regularly first so they can give honest reviews later. It is at this time that it is seen that the admin acts as the main communicator. With messages sent by the admin in the form of information about product reviews such as product briefs or directives through the media, namely the WhatsApp group. This also follows the theory of group achievement on the media variable element. The media variable describes the operation and functioning of a group because of the formal structure and role structure. Stogdill argues that two things go into the group's role, namely responsibility and authority and not position [5] Although there is no clear group structure in Beauty Class Jogja since BCJ opened a product review collaboration, the founder of BCJ appointed 2 members to help him become an admin. The admin function here is to be an intermediary for brands and members so that the cooperation process goes well. As a result, the admin looks more dominant than ordinary members. Not only that, in conducting product reviews, members know their roles and responsibilities in maintaining BCJ's good name in the eyes of the public and the brand.

After members receive and capture messages from the admin, members will immediately create product review content according to the directions. However, because the group communication process is only through groups on the WhatsApp application, it is very possible that messages are not conveyed properly. For this reason, the admin always allows members to ask questions if they do not understand the brief given (can be seen in Figure 2). Questions asked by a member do not have to be answered by the admin alone. These questions can be answered by other members (interview with Rina Is Harwanti as an active member of BCJ, October 12, 2021). However, according to Ms. Syarifa, even though a member usually answers questions from other members, the members will still wait for re-confirmation from the admin so that there are no errors (interview with Syarifa Giftia as an active member of BCJ, October 16, 2021). This refers to the elements of social interaction on the input factors of members in group communication theory.

According to Stogdill, social interaction is a reaction of a member which is a response to the reaction of other members so that interaction includes action and reaction [5]

Figure 2

Screenshot of Q&A Made by Admin



Source: Personal Documentation

Each BCJ member has different advantages in making product reviews. Whether it's more proficient in copywriting, content editing, or photography. The speakers said that they always ask each other, exchange opinions, and share knowledge to try to create better review content to improve the quality of the reviews made by Beauty Class Jogja members. This refers to the function of education in the function of group communication and is following the element of expectation on the input factors of members in the theory of group achievement. The element of hope occurs when the members always desire to be better in product reviews, and they support each other to bring BCJ to a better direction.

Because the products reviewed by BCJ members are beauty or cosmetic products, often the products that need to be reviewed are not suitable for the skin of Beauty Class Jogja members. To solve problems like this, usually the member concerned will convey the problem to the WhatsApp group to ask for opinions and solutions to the admin or other members (interview with Syarifa Giftia as an active member of BCJ, October 16, 2021). In solving problems, the Beauty Class Jogja admin always includes members to provide solutions. Although the final decision remains with the admin. The members also believe that the decision taken by the admin is the best decision for BCJ and for the brand concerned. The solution given to this problem is that the admin continues to ask members to provide honest reviews while maintaining the good name of the brand in question. According to group achievement theory, this refers to the elements of the results of actions on input factors from members related to interactions in groups such as: cooperation, planning something, making decisions, and so on [5].

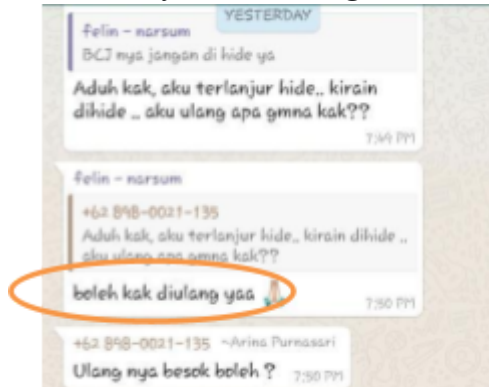
(b) Stage 2 – Upload Review and Evaluation Content

BCJ admin always frees its members to develop their review content according to their own creativity. This is in accordance with the morals of the group achievement elements of group achievement theory [5]. Although the review content produced by BCJ members is different, there will still be similarities in it. Namely, there is an element of honesty in conducting reviews, originality, and in accordance with the product brief provided by the brand. This refers to the unified element in group achievement theory. To reduce the possibility for members to conduct product reviews dishonestly and unoriginally or not according to the brief, the brand will ask the admin to draft the content first before the review content is uploaded on each member's social media. Through drafting, members usually have to wait for approval from the admin or brand before uploading review content (interview with Fayruzia Luthfi as BCJ admin, October 22, 2021).

After the members upload their review content, the admin always prepares a google sheet for the members' report media which will make it easier for the admin to check the review content that the members have uploaded. If there is a member's post that is not following the admin's directions which must be honest, original, and according to the brief, the admin will immediately contact the member and ask him to withdraw and require him to revise according to the admin's direction before being uploaded back to the member's social media (can be seen in figure 3). Suppose the member still does not do what is asked or repeats the mistake in the next project review. In that case, the member will be given a warning which will continue to give sanctions in the form of not being allowed to participate in the next two to three project reviews or even being expelled from BCJ. This is following the persuasion function in the group communication function.

Figure 3

Screenshot of Admin Asking to Revise Content



Source: Personal Documentation

Although the communication of the BCJ group in conducting product reviews is only through the WhatsApp group application, it does not hamper the productivity and quality of the reviews produced by the members. This can be seen from the routine product review collaborations run by BCJ with various beauty brands. In fact, according to Ms. Fayruzia, many brands say that BCJ is a beauty community with a neat, organized, and very professional system that makes brands that have worked with BCJ feel satisfied, thus recommending BCJ to other brands to work with, thus making BCJ even more more and more developed and known. This leads to the productivity element in the group achievement theory, which means that BCJ has used the WhatsApp group application as a channel for group communication in conducting product reviews. This is following the results of Yudha Pradana's research entitled "Utilization of Virtual Community as a Communication Media for Pokemon Go Game Group (JPR) through Social Media" which says that the JPR community has succeeded in utilizing social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp groups starting from forming, constructing messages, to carry out group communication so that the JPR community is growing and known in the Pokemon Go game world, especially in Indonesia [8].

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that in the communication process of the Beauty Class Jogja group in conducting product reviews through the WhatsApp group application, the admin acts more as a communicator, and members act as communicants. Because messages are delivered indirectly, namely only through the WhatsApp group application, often messages are not delivered properly. So, to minimize this incident, the admin always allows members to ask questions if there are things that are not understood. Questions asked by a member do not have to be answered by the admin alone, other members can answer these questions. Even so, members will still wait for re-confirmation from the admin so that there are no errors.

When conducting product reviews, BCJ always provides freedom for members to develop review content according to their respective creativity as long as the reviews made must be honest, original, and according to the brief given by the brand. Suppose a member is found who does not make review content according to the directions. In that case, the admin will ask the member to withdraw and require him to revise according to the admin's directions before being uploaded back to the member's social media.

BCJ is always open if there are members who ask for input in order to develop product review capabilities to improve the quality of the reviews produced by BCJ members. In solving problems, the BCJ admin also always involves members to participate in providing solutions even though the final decision is still in the hands of the admin.

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