Why Government Failed: A Reception Analysis Towards Large Scale Social Restriction in Indonesia

Putri aisyiyah rachma dewi[1,*] Awang dharmawan[2] Sjafiatul mardliyah[3] Agus prasetyawan[4], Yuni lestari[5]

[1,2]*Communication science department*
[3]*Non formal education department*
[4,5]*Department of public administration*
Universitas Negeri Surabaya
Surabaya, Indonesia
[*]*Corresponding author. Email: putridewi@unesa.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on reception analysis of the Government's message regarding the imposition of large-scale social restrictions (in bahasa Indonesia, it refers to Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar or PSBB) in the Covid-19 pandemic situation. The research location includes three cities in East Java Province, Indonesia, namely Surabaya, Gresik, and Sidoarjo. East Java is the province with the highest number of Covid-19 sufferers in Indonesia, and these three cities are the largest contributors to the number in East Java. This research uses descriptive quantitative method, and uses the reception analysis theory proposed by Stuart Hall. The results showed that audiences who received PSBB information messages had different decoding processes. Most of the people negotiated the meaning of the PSBB message, but there were also large number of people who were in dominant and opposition to the message.

Keywords— reception analysis, crisis communication, psbb, large scale social restriction, pandemic covid-19

1. INTRODUCTION

There were three cities in East Java Province, Indonesia, that became the first target of the PSBB policy in East Java, namely Surabaya, Gresik, and Sidoarjo. As is well known, East Java Province is the province with the highest level of Covid-19 transmission in Indonesia. The spread of Covid-19 in the Province headed by Khofifah Indar Parawansa reached 588 people as of April 19, 2020. In fact, on March 16, 2020 there were still 0 cases, and on March 18 only confirmed the first 8 positive cases of Covid-19 in Java East.

On April 19, the governor summoned three regional heads. They are Tri Rismaharini (Mayor of Surabaya), Nur Ahmad Syaifuddin (Regent of Sidoarjo), and Samnari Halim R (Regent of Gresik) to discuss preparations for large scale social restriction, known as PSBB. The PSBB policy was taken based on an epidemiological study of the Faculty of Public Health (FKM) Universitas Airlangga which showed that

Surabaya Raya had a score of 10 or the highest on the evaluation scale so that the PSBB had to be enforced.

Based on data released by the East Java Provincial Government after the meeting, it was found that 65% of cases of the positive spread of COVID-19 in East Java occurred in three Surabaya Raya areas. All sub-districts in Surabaya, totaling 31 sub-districts, have positive cases of Covid-19. Meanwhile in Gresik, of the 18 sub-districts that have positive cases of Covid-19, it reaches 11 sub-districts. And Sidoarjo, out of 18 sub-districts, 14 of them have been confirmed to have been exposed to Covid-19 at the time the PSBB phase I submission was filed.

The government began to socialize the policy, including its implementation and consequences, through various media channels. They use print media, national and local television, online news portals, provide socialization by going directly to the communities (to shopping centers, community centers), through official government social media accounts, and so on.

The various messages in the various media have received variative responses from the public, some are pro and some are refusing, and some are accepting in certain conditions.

As Fischer pointed out, however, research that tries to measure the effectiveness of communication is too difficult to get consistent results from one context to another [1]. This difficulty increases in crisis situations, where many other factors determine the effectiveness of the message, such as: mitigation, government readiness, community readiness, as well as recovery actions. So this research also reduces other factors, such as what the Government does regarding PSBB and policy implementation. The limitation of this research is public acceptance of the PSBB message of the East Java Government.

Research on the effects of media messages on audiences actually has five traditions, namely: the media effects tradition, the uses and gratification tradition, the literary criticism tradition, cultural studies, and reception analysis [2].

This research belongs to the fifth tradition, reception analysis, because the audience or society here is not seen as a passive group that allows itself to be exposed to the message just like that and interpret exactly what the sender of the message expects. In reception analysis research, the decoding process of the communicant will produce different meanings for each individual even though they are exposed to the same message.

As Stuart Hall states in Reception Theory, there are three types of audiences in receiving messages: dominant, negotiation, and opposition. The position of the message recipient will be an indicator of the effectiveness of the message packaged by the communicator.

The dominant position is when the audience interprets the message as expected by the communicator. they agree with the content of the message and do not have the slightest resistance to the message conveyed.

In the type of negotiation process, what happens is that the community understands what is being said. However, there are certain situations where the audience's understanding becomes incomplete. In other words, they agreed with what the message maker said but with a few notes.

In the third type, they reject or disapprove of the messages conveyed. Instead, they create an understanding of the opposition or provide an alternative meaning that is different from the meaning of the message maker. The rejection is due to the values and experiences of the audience.

Such as a research conducted by Liu on 162 students to see how they accept the crisis communication carried out by the government. The results of this study indicate that the media or channels for distributing messages and also the character of the message sources affect how the teenagers interpret the messages conveyed. In crisis situations, they pay more attention to these two things than in normal situations [3].

The results of this research will help policy makers to formulate a more effective crisis communication strategy in the future. However, the failure to convey accurate and credible information during a crisis will make people easily provoked by other information that will lead them to become opposition groups. If the number of opponents increases, the government's steps will be ineffective due to the receipt of wrong messages in society [4].

2. METHODS

The method used in this research is survey with quantitative descriptive analysis. Sampling was carried out by random and proportional sampling. The survey reached 308 respondents and questionnaires were distributed online via the google form application. A total of 189 respondents or 61 percent live in Surabaya. Furthermore, respondents who came from Sidoarjo with a total of 67 respondents or as much as 22 percent. Then 52 people live in Gresik or 17 percent.

The analysis of message reception uses the social-science method which gives researchers flexibility to connect the quantitative data obtained with the surrounding social context. This makes message analysis research inseparable from the practice of producing and distributing meaning in social order [5] [6].

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

3.1 Unequal Information Exposure to the Community

The results showed that not all people have good knowledge (cognition) about PBB socialization. There were 161 respondents who agree and 47 other respondents strongly agree that the East Java Provincial Government has carried out socialization regarding the PSBB policy for the Greater Surabaya area (Surabaya City, Sidoarjo Regency, and Gresik Regency). Most of the respondents in the three Greater Surabaya areas agreed with the Government's work in providing the PSBB socialization. Most of the respondents in Greater Surabaya followed policy information from the local government to deal with the spread of COVID-19.

But in another part, there were 72 respondents who disagreed and 28 respondents who strongly disagreed that the East Java Provincial Government had carried out the socialization of the PSBB. In other words, one third

of the respondents were not exposed to the adequate distribution of information about Covid-19 from the Government.

In the concept of crisis communication, this can be a negative gap for local governments who are deemed not to provide fast and equitable information to the public, especially in relation to the PSBB policy in deciding the spread of COVID-19.

Graham, Avery & Park has conducted research involving 300 local government officials throughout the United States to see how they carry out crisis communication using social media. The research results show that the variety of media used is directly proportional to their ability to control crisis situations and gain public trust[7].

The East Java government when conducting the socialization of the PSBB did not utilize all communication channels massively and effectively. There are many official accounts belonging to government agencies on social media platforms, but account managers did not immediately synergize when the pandemic crisis began. They just felt the need to work together, especially when they were about to carry out the second phase of the PSBB.

3.2 Acceptance of the Urgency of PSBB Implementation

The data explains that 121 respondents agreed that the PSBB policy was the right effort to break the Covid-19 chain. And as many as 88 respondents strongly agree regarding the PSBB to break the Covid-19 chain. These two groups belong to the audience in the dominant position, namely those who interpret the message as expected by the communicator, in this context the Provincial Government of East Java.

However, there were 72 respondents who disagreed and 27 respondents who strongly disagreed that PSBB was the right step to stop the spread of Covid-19. They are an opposition group, who reject the idea of the PSBB as an effective measure to tackle Covid-19. So that if you add up, there are about 32% of respondents who reject the PSBB that can cut the spread of Covid-19. If these two groups of numbers are added up, then those who think that the PSBB is not useful is actually quite large, and at that time it needs to be an evaluation for the East Java Provincial Government.

Those who rejected the PSBB explained further their answers. Whereas the biggest rejection is due to the assumption that there are no sanctions against PSBB violators so that this policy is useless.

The sanctions given by the Government to PSBB violators are still very loose and only in a few cases. For example, in the Governor of East Java Regulation

Number 18 of 2020, the Government limits religious activities in places of worship, limits learning activities in schools, but the Government does not impose restrictions on activities in malls and shopping centers. The factor of economic resources and a place for many people to earn a living, is the government's motive for not closing malls and shopping centers.

In addition, during the 1st and 2nd stage of the PSBB there were still many activities in cafes, coffee shops and other public places that continued to operate normally as before the PSBB. Only a small proportion of cases have been sanctioned and followed up by the Government, so that residents consider the implementation of the PSBB in Surabaya to be so loose, so they are vulnerable to being ignored, even though residents know this is important to break the chain of Covid-19 spread.

This is very different from what happened in China, the country where the Covid-19 virus was first discovered. The Chinese government is very good at messaging when a pandemic crisis occurs. They are consistent between policies and the application of sanctions. In addition, they also pay attention to the needs of residents during the lockdown. This has made public trust in the Government so high and they obey what is conveyed by the Government through various media. It is proven that the lockdown policy is effective in stopping the pace of Covid-19 in the country[8][9].

3.3 Reception of 'behaviour change" message

Survey results shows that 157 respondents agreed that they participated in realizing the PSBB policy. In fact, 112 other respondents strongly agreed that they participated in realizing the PSBB policy.

These two data points, if added together, there are 87% of Surabaya Raya residents who agree to support and participate in the PSBB policy. Meanwhile, there were 26 respondents who disagreed, and 13 respondents who strongly disagreed with participating in realizing the implementation of the PSBB, which when added together these two groups became 39 respondents or 10% of the total respondents.

Based on the data above, it can be explained that almost all residents in the three Greater Surabaya areas (Surabaya City, Sidoarjo Regency, and Gresik Regency) feel that they have participated in implementing Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). This condition occurs because there are regulations restricting activities at schools, colleges, followed by a temporary suspension of work activities in offices and temporary restrictions on activities in places of worship. Therefore, in the end, the mobility and social life of residents in Greater Surabaya are limited by these regulations.

3.4 Economy as a trigger for negotiation & opposition

From the results, 110 respondents agreed that the PSBB policy had an economic impact on respondents and their families. Even as many as 162 respondents were severely affected economically through the PSBB policy in Greater Surabaya. This condition is logical, because the PSBB policy has rules for the temporary suspension of work activities in office premises, cessation of activities in educational institutions, restrictions on public transportation modes, prohibition of online motorcycle taxis from carrying passengers, restrictions on socio-cultural activities, enforcing operating hours for cafes and eating places until 20.00 and the prohibition of enjoying the menu at the restaurant.

On the other hand, it turns out that the PSBB is also a strong concern for the majority of the community. When transportation, mobilization, and transactions carried out by the community experience restrictions, this has an economic impact. Based on a release delivered by the Head of the Office of Manpower and Transmigration in East Java, there are 50,379 workers in East Java who have experienced layoffs (PHK) and been laid off since the last four months the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the people of East Java.

Especially for workers who experienced layoffs due to the impact of the corona, there were 6,942 people spread across 231 companies in East Java. Meanwhile, there are 34,108 workers who have been dismissed in 607 companies. Many of the workers who were dismissed were from the hotel and restaurant sector, while the workers who were laid off mostly worked in the manufacturing industry, wood processing industry, and trade.

From the diagram above, it can be seen that as many as 106 respondents agreed that they continued to work outside the home to make ends meet. And 71 other respondents strongly agree that they continue to work outside. This means that if these two data are added together, around 57% of residents in Greater Surabaya still want activities outside the home, with an urgent reason, namely to work. This number is more than the residents of Greater Surabaya who wish to remain at home during the implementation of the PSBB.

Based on explanation above, we need to pay close attention, that on the one hand there are around 87% of residents of Greater Surabaya agreeing to participate in the PSBB policy, but on the other hand the majority of residents of Greater Surabaya are still very dependent on jobs that require activities outside their home. Even though these two things are certainly contradictory, because the PSBB policy stipulates that there are restrictions on activities in offices, schools, universities, and commercial social activities. Therefore, for office

activities, work from home rules are enforced. However, there are still many incidents carried out by residents of Greater Surabaya, namely continuing to do activities such as trading and going to work for reasons of economic factors.

The resilience of PSBB actually needs to be accompanied by economic strength for the residents who run it. Therefore, when the government is unable to guarantee comprehensive social assistance for each of its citizens, the PSBB Surabaya Raya is sufficient until the second PSBB. In fact, from an epidemiological study, three regions, namely Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Gresik, still do not meet the requirements to stop the lockdown. But for reasons of economic interests, the governments of the three regions asked the East Java Provincial Government to complete the PSBB in only two sequences.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data finding in the field, we know that there were a huge number of people who lack of information about large scale social restriction. The second finding, PSBB messages are perceived differently. Unfortunately, the percentage of negotiation group is higher than the dominant group. Furthermore, there is still a group of people who reject the implementation and the information.

That situation explain why East Java governments still have to catch up with the Covid-19 rate. In fact, until this report was written, Surabaya Raya was still the highest contributor to the number of Covid-19 spread throughout Indonesia.

This means that a new strategy is needed to package and convey messages to the public to be more effective, to increase the number of dominant audiences and to reduce the number of negotiations, and even to eliminate opposition audiences. In this way, the Government's goal to reducing the Covid-19 curve can be achieved.

The suggestion of this research is the need for further and comprehensive data exploration on personal factors that make public acceptance of this PSBB different, especially those who have a priori attitude towards messages.

Like research conducted by Thorson. He explores how teenagers respond to political issues that appear on Facebook. The results showed that young people were very much influenced by values and their social environment, resulting in different interpretations of one political reality. However, this could not occur when the children filled out the questionnaire. The answer appears in the process of extracting data through in-depth interviews conducted after the survey [10].

Hopefully this research will be the opening piece to complete the puzzle of knowledge about information, message effects, and also the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in Indonesia.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REFERENCES

[1] D. Fischer, O. Posegga, and K. Fischbach, "Communication barriers in crisis management: A literature review," in 24th European Conference on Information Systems, ECIS 2016, 2016.

[2] K. B. Jensen and K. E. Rosengren, "Five Traditions in Search of the Audience," Eur. J. Commun., 1990.

[3] B. F. Liu, L. Austin, and Y. Jin, "How publics respond to crisis communication strategies: The interplay of information form and source," Public Relat. Rev., 2011.

[4] N. M. Jones, R. R. Thompson, C. D. Schetter, and R. C. Silver, "Distress and rumor exposure on social media during a campus lockdown," Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A., 2017.

[5] K. B. Jensen, Media audiences reception analysis: Mass communication as the social production of meaning. 1991.

[6] A. Ahuvia, "Traditional, interpretive, and reception based content analyses: Improving the ability of content analysis to address issues of pragmatic and theoretical concern," Soc. Indic. Res., 2001.

[7] M. W. Graham, E. J. Avery, and S. Park, "The role of social media in local government crisis communications," Public Relat. Rev., 2015.

[8] B. S. V. K. A. P. P. K. P. A. M. D. V. M. J. S. P. J. B. P. T. K. M. D. Hien Lau, "positive impact of lockdown in Wuhan on containing the COVID-19 outbreak in China | Journal of Travel Medicine | Oxford Academic," J. Travel Med., 2020.

[9] W. T. Coombs, "The value of communication during a crisis: Insights from strategic communication research," Bus. Horiz., 2015.

[10] K. Thorson, "Facing an uncertain reception: Young citizens and political interaction on Facebook," Inf. Commun. Soc., 2014.