Organizational Communication Climate of Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau During Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) over the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a global pandemic has threatened public health. This not only triggers changes in health and social and economic norms, but also has an impact on changes in organizational communication norms and processes, interactions between people and the use of new media which causes the organizational communication climate to adapt to situations and conditions that occur. The Bureau of Support for the Promotion of Human Rights on Indonesian National Human Rights Commission is one of the state organizations or institutions that has the duty and authority to promote human rights. This study aims to explore the organizational communication climate and media innovation applied at the Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau of the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission and to find out more about the organization's strategic policies and their implications during the COVID-19 pandemic related to achieving organizational goals. This study uses a qualitative research approach with a constructivist paradigm. Collecting data through purposive techniques, namely the selection of certain informants according to research needs through interviews, participatory observations and literature studies. The results show that the right organizational policies in managing the organizational communication climate at the Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights can spur employee productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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1. Introduction

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a statement declaring the Coronavirus Disease of 2019 (COVID-19) a global health emergency or Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Shortly after this statement, on March 11, 2020, WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The COVID-19 global health crisis that threatens public health is considered a turning point in history that can change the current social and economic norms. This crisis ultimately triggers a new human era. The crisis has caused hundreds of thousands of deaths and tested the limits of the health system, and then put the world into a state of great lockdown in which the global economy experienced its worst recession.

With this outbreak, there are several serious impacts on the human environment. Several community activities began to be disrupted, starting from office activities, education, lifestyle, economy, culture, and especially communication activities. After the pandemic, communication and physical interaction between individuals are no longer a top priority. Communication and interaction are slowly being replaced by meetings in cyberspace or virtual worlds. This is a challenge for all levels of society regardless of age limit.

The work system in the normal order has also changed, which previously had face-to-face meetings to switch to online (online). Every individual inevitably has to adapt to the situation. Likewise with non-technical work that is usually done in office areas, now it can be replaced by working at each individual’s home online. Even for official meetings, expert meetings and discussions, there are currently many applications such as the Zoom platform, Google Meet, WhatsApp, and others. At the same time socialization and dissemination activities, performances, talk shows, collaborations, public relations, can also be carried out through social media with the applications YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Spotify and various other applications which are developing very rapidly which are also in demand by the wider community.

Seeing the conditions and development of communication caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, communication activities were then diverted and carried out at home or now known as "Bekerja Dari Rumah" (BDR) or "Work From Home (WFH)". This requires that all individuals, both individuals and those involved in an organization, are "forced" to have the ability and skills to be able to master various virtual applications to communicate with other people. Not only forced to master how to communicate well and interestingly, but also forced to make information that can be received by the audience properly and precisely according to the expected goals. This phenomenon certainly has an impact on the process of communication and interaction that occurs between individuals with one another. Likewise in the communication process in an organization that experiences significant changes in achieving organizational goals.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative research approach with a constructivist paradigm. Collecting data through purposive techniques, namely selecting certain informants according to research needs through interviews, participatory observation and literature study.
Daniel Kartz and Robert Kahn (in Hardjana, 2016: 10) define organizational communication as a social system that is alive and open because it is formed through information relations between people who have different roles. Interaction activities with the flow of information between people make the organization live dynamically. In essence, organizational communication is a manager's effort in communicating organizational goals to its members or other people related to organizational activities. And of course it is accompanied by the development of communication technology which is increasingly advanced day by day and of course will have an impact on the forms of communication that occur within the organization itself. Based on this, organizational communication becomes something very important in determining the success of an organization.

According to organizational information theory, the organization is not a structure consisting of a number of positions and roles but is a communication activity, so that a more appropriate designation is organizing or organizing (which shows the process) rather than organization or organization, because organization is something to be achieved through a communication process that is sustainable (Karl Weick, in Morrisan, 2022).

In conditions of a health emergency crisis that occurs, one of the determining factors for testing the quality of a good organization is through response and ongoing communication so that it always supports the achievement of organizational goals. New communication systems and methods during a pandemic have created an organizational communication climate that has changed from previous methods.

According to Pace and Faules (2002), organizational communication climate is a combination of perceptions about communication events, human behaviour, employee responses to other employees, expectations, interpersonal conflicts and opportunities for growth in the organization. Communication climate includes perceptions about messages and message-related events that occur within the organization. Furthermore, Pace and Faules (2002) also stated that the climate of communication within an organization is very important because the communication climate of an organization influences the social life of its members such as who we talk to, who we like, how we feel, how our work activities are, how our development progresses. us, what we want to achieve and how we fit into the organization. A good, comfortable and positive communication climate is believed to increase the work motivation of members of the organization or employees of an organization, the communication climate plays a central role in encouraging members of the organization to organize, if the communication climate in the organizational environment where he works is good and positive then these employees tend to have strong work motivation and commitment to the company or organization.

The interactions that occur between members of the organization, whether between co-workers, superiors and subordinates or vice versa, will increase knowledge and understanding for members of the organization regarding the background, experience, attitudes and behaviour of other people. The relationships that occur in this organization will directly or indirectly affect the growth of the organization, as well as the behaviour of members of the organization both positively and negatively so that it will shape the perceptions of each member of the organization. This collection of perceptions shows the organizational climate.

According to Wirawan (2009: 122), organizational climate is the perception of members of the organization (individually or in groups) and those who are in constant
contact with the organization about what is or happens in the organization's internal environment on a regular basis. Organizational climate influences organizational attitudes and behaviour and the performance of organizational members which then determines organizational performance. Meanwhile, according to Pasaribu and Indrawati (2016), organizational climate is the relative environmental quality of the organization experienced by its members, where it has an effect on behaviour and how the organization functions properly.

Subawa and Surya (2017), state that organizational climate is a person's perception regarding aspects of work and organizational values. Thus it is stated that organizational climate is a perception of each individual regarding the characteristics and conditions of the organization that influence a person's behaviour in carrying out work.

Halpin and Don B. Croft (1999) classify the forms of organizational climates (organizational climate typology) as follows:

1. Open climate, namely the atmosphere of enthusiastic organizational work, satisfaction of group members in meeting their needs. The actions of the leadership are smooth and harmonious. Employee job satisfaction is marked by the completion of tasks properly, while personal needs are met. The characteristics of such an organizational climate is the fairness of everyone's behaviour.

2. Free climate, namely the organizational atmosphere in which the leader's actions emerge first of all from the group. Leaders don't do much supervision, morale appears initially to fulfil personal satisfaction. While job satisfaction also appears, it's just a small level. Job satisfaction here is the satisfaction caused by activities that can be completed.

3. Controlled climate, characterized by impersonal and very concerned with the task, while the needs of members of the organization are given less attention. And the existence of group members will only pay attention to the tasks set by the leader, while the attention they pay to personal needs is relatively small. The team work spirit is indeed high, but it reflects the sacrifice of aspects of human needs. The hallmark of this climate is the existence of inappropriate behaviour because the group is only task oriented.

4. Familiar climate, namely organizational climate that is too humane and uncontrolled. The members of the organization are only competing to meet personal needs, but pay less attention to completing tasks and social control is less noticed. Meanwhile, the morale of the members of the organization is not so high, because they get little satisfaction in completing tasks.

5. Fatherland climate, in which the organization is characterized by an emphasis on the emergence of leadership activities by members of the organization. Usually leaders do not value initiative and creativity. The skills possessed by the group are not used to complement work abilities. In an organizational climate like this, little satisfaction is obtained by subordinates, both related to work results and individual needs. So that the morale of the organizational group will also be low.

6. Closed climate, namely where members of the organization are generally indifferent. Organizations become undeveloped, morale is low, because members of the organization besides being unable to meet personal demands, also cannot obtain satisfaction from the results of their work. The behaviour of members in
such an organizational climate is felt to be unnatural, in fact the organization seems
to be going backwards.

Redding (Goldhaber, 1995:65-67) mentions five ideal factors inherent in a communication
cclimate:

1. Supportiveness/Support.
   Employees view that their communication relationship with superiors can build and
   increase self-awareness about the meaning and importance of their role.

2. Participation Decision Making / Participatory Decision Making. Awareness in
   employees that their communication with superiors has benefits and influences to
   be heard and taken into account.

3. Trust, Confidence, Credibility / Honesty, Confidence and Credibility. The
   employee’s assumption that the source of the message or communication events
   that occur can be trusted.

4. Openness and Candor/ Openness and candor. There is openness and candor in
   sending and receiving messages in formal and informal communication.

5. High Performance Goals / High work goals. The level of clarity of description and
   explanation of performance objectives that are communicated and felt by
   employees.

This research was conducted at the Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human
Rights within the Republic of Indonesia’s National Commission on Human Rights
(hereinafter referred to as Komnas HAM) located in the city of Jakarta. The Support Bureau
for the Promotion of Human Rights is one of the technical bureaus apart from the other 4
Bureaus, whose job is to carry out the function of Promotion human rights (human rights
promotion, The Paris Principles). This function is regulated in Article 89 paragraph (1) and
paragraph (2) of the Human Rights Law, which is to carry out duties on studies and research
as well as counselling aimed at preventing human rights violations from occurring. Through
studies and research, the Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights seeks to
encourage ratification of international human rights instruments, changes in policies and
laws and regulations so that they are in line with human rights norms and standards, and
discussion of various issues related to human rights. Meanwhile, through counselling, the
Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights seeks to raise awareness of human
rights for state apparatus and society, disseminate human rights insights to all levels of
society, and cooperate with formal and informal institutions at the national, regional and
international levels.

Article 1 states that "human rights are a set of rights that are inherent in the nature and
existence of humans as creatures of the duty of the Almighty and are His gifts that must be
respected, upheld high and protected by the rule of law, government and everyone for the
honour and protection of human dignity." Based on the above formulation, it can be
concluded that every person is born free with equal human dignity and worth and
is endowed with reason and conscience to live in a society, nation and state in a spirit of
brotherhood, is natural and fundamental as a gift from God Almighty who must be
respected, guarded, and protected by every individual, society, or country. The rights
possessed by everyone certainly cannot be exercised freely, because he is dealing directly
and must respect the rights of other people. Human rights consist of two of the most fundamental things, namely the right to equality and the right to freedom. Without these two things it will be very difficult to uphold other human rights.

The incident of the COVID-19 pandemic has of course had a very high impact on the work carried out by the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights. Accelerating the increase in knowledge capacity for innovation and motivation from civil servants in the Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic is a new challenge for leaders and top level management. The management of human resources or civil servants, of course, has its own uniqueness and complexity because the apparatus carries out cooperative dynamics in a structured manner, has physical, social status and psychological aspects such as motivation, talent, interests, thoughts, feelings, and heterogeneous socio-cultural backgrounds both vertically and horizontally which can distinguish one from another. To produce a good communication process within an organization, it is necessary to build harmonious cooperation and synergy with other work units in order to create an understanding, a unity of experience, and a common understanding and perception in achieving organizational goals.

Work systems that have changed to online or online have resulted in all employees from top to bottom having to adapt to this situation. The new work systems and methods have created an organizational communication climate that has changed from before, one example of a problem, such as changes in face-to-face communication interactions in the work environment, which were previously considered easier and faster, now have to carry out communication interactions with online systems remotely, which sometimes experience problems. obstacles by adjusting the time between one another, not even sending messages to miss communication. Of course this will have an impact on the performance of employees who are less productive and result in the achievement of organizational goals.

Referring to the author’s search in the last 3 years, that organizational communication studies studied from the perspective of communication science such as Octavianti, et al (2019), Subekti, et al (2019), and Lenggawa (2019) show that organizational communication is very necessary in an organization. Through appropriate communication media, it is hoped that it can realize time and energy efficiency and be able to unify and align the formats and types of organizational communication at all levels. With this, it can create a conducive organizational communication climate so that organizational performance at various levels can be productive and optimal.

Based on this background, the formulation of the problem is how is the organizational communication climate at the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau during the COVID-19 pandemic? This study aims to explore the organizational communication climate that was created in the Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights of the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Results and Discussion

The National Commission on Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia (Komnas HAM RI) is an independent institution at the same level as a state institution that has the
authority in Law no. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, Law no. 26 of 2000 concerning the Human Rights Court, and Law no. 40 of 2008 concerning the Elimination of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination. The National Commission on Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia aims to encourage the creation of a conducive situation in the implementation of human rights in accordance with Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as to improve the protection, promotion and enforcement of human rights for all Indonesian people so that they are able to participate in various fields of life. This is as emphasized in Article 75 letters a and b of the Human Rights Law.

Since the Reformation era, the position of the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights has become increasingly important and strategic within the framework of a modern democratic state, which is reflected in the recognition of human rights in the life of the state, where the norms of human rights have become the constitutional rights of every citizen as guaranteed by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in Article 27, Article 28, Article 28A to Article 28J, and Article 29.

The National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Indonesia has four functions according to the Human Rights Law and various authorities as an independent institution that exercises control and supervision of state administrators so that they obey and carry out human rights norms. This is especially in the context of supervising the implementation of the constitutional obligations of state administrators (duty bearers) in respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights, as well as for the community as rights holders. Supervision of duty bearers is very important in order to create democratic state governance based on human rights. This is not only related to the intended achievement (result), but also the process of how to achieve the country's development goals, including the behaviour and actions of state officials which are reflected in the regulations, policies, programs and activities that are created and implemented.

Support provided by management to employees is also seen, among others, in the form of support in terms of communication, namely the existence of effective communication between leaders and employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from that, activities can also be carried out with intensive support through online methods. The existence of collaboration between units shows that there is harmonious communication, even better so as to increase self-awareness about the meaning and importance of the roles of all employees, this in the end is to achieve organizational goals.

In addition, support can be obtained from the environment, namely:

1. Internal bureau, where employees have awareness and responsibility for their position, sufficient number of personnel, understand their rights and responsibilities, career certainty, as well as available infrastructure and availability of work regulations for employees.

2. External bureau, where there is a need for services from outside the bureau which can be interpreted as requests from leaders/commissioners, discussion of actual issues, responses from the public, stakeholders and Komnas HAM RI work partners. Apart from the environment, support can also be obtained in terms of support for employee involvement, the contribution of employees to the activities
of the Support Bureau for the Promotion of Human Rights during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees provide mutual support such as motivational support, empathy and appreciation. Likewise, leaders can provide good assessments, as well as provide assignments to add insight to employees so that this form of support is an effective organizational strategy to help organizations build strong relationships between leaders and employees.

The form of employee participation is where the leader gives as much space as possible to employees to be able to provide initiation, suggestions and input as well as criticism even though the implementation carried out by the leadership to employees is sometimes felt to be not optimal. The use of new media during the COVID-19 pandemic also provides great opportunities for greater participation. Overall the leadership is open to receiving suggestions and input, employees are quite active in providing input/suggestions, and then the leadership makes this as evaluation material to serve as a basis for the accuracy of decision making and policies based on the accuracy of the information available.

Furthermore, mutual trust is also seen in the field findings. So far, the leadership has given full trust to employees to be able to work properly and responsibly. Leaders provide flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic so that employees can work optimally to achieve organizational targets. Leaders also give confidence in the work system by creating work mechanisms according to the situation and conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, with WFO and WFH work policies. This condition creates good relations and creates a sense of trust, honesty and openness between leaders and employees.

In the form of openness and candor, the majority showed a fairly positive level of openness and candor, although there were a few who felt uncomfortable with the leadership. Dialogue efforts to minimize misunderstandings can be seen in work situations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is able to create a conducive communication climate so that it can influence work motivation for the better. Leaders are open to receiving problems, criticism and suggestions. In addition, leaders are able to socialize information using various communication media, provide solutions and are able to translate employee wishes, so that tasks and obligations can still be carried out. On the other hand, employees can provide input, suggestions or criticism to the leadership in the meeting mechanism, and the existence of candor regarding the needs of leaders who have high managerial experience is also conveyed at coordination meetings of the Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau.

One of the organizational communication climates is determined by high work goals. The division of work tasks by the leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic was very clear and flexible, so that employees were able to understand the tasks assigned by the leadership. Employees can complete the tasks given, and show harmony between employees, namely providing mutual support at work, understanding working conditions and how to deal with them when a pandemic occurs so that this is able to create a safe and comfortable work atmosphere. Likewise in meetings, employees give positive responses both in group discussions. Leaders and employees alike give a positive response so that the achievement of organizational goals can be achieved properly. This illustrates various work motivations, creative ideas as well as hopes/inputs conveyed to support each other's work.

Another thing that can also have an impact on the organizational communication climate is individual diversity and conflict management within the organization. At the Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau of the National Commission on Human Rights, it
can be seen that individual characteristics are very diverse, and self-awareness is needed at both the leadership and employee levels to create a safe and comfortable working atmosphere. In addition, positive initiative, creativity and innovation are also needed so that organizational goals can still be achieved. For Leaders, diversity actually makes employees respect one another. Komnas HAM is an institution that upholds human rights from various ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds, education, religion, skin colour, gender, age and others. Furthermore, with good communication management, this will have a positive impact on the organization. Employees with disabilities are also included in the diversity that characterizes the organizational communication process at the Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau.

Conflict management in the Indonesian Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau is carried out in a way that leaders can impose sanctions on non-performing employees. However, the imposition of sanctions on employees is still given but prioritizes the principles of organizational communication which are considered more humane and dignified. Good and appropriate conflict management can maintain a conducive organizational communication climate so that employees can produce productive performance. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the right media is also needed so that interpretation in organizational communication can be interpreted properly. It takes expertise and a big role from the leadership in order to overcome and manage conflict in a more positive direction. For example, in terms of working time management during the COVID-19 pandemic, the leadership resolved this by issuing policies on employee working hours flexibility and then adjusting work targets through work innovation and creativity including the use of media that supports employees at work.

Organizational information theory assumes that an organization must have a procedure to manage all information it wants to receive or send to achieve its goals. Information circulating in the Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau of the National Commission on Human Rights occurs in three forms, namely top down, bottom up and diagonal or across sectors. The flow of information in the form of top down is information that comes from leaders to employees, for example delivery related to policies, instructions, and motivation. Conversely, the flow of information is bottom up, namely employees can convey information to leaders, for example in terms of providing suggestions, input, criticism, and reports. For diagonal or cross-sectoral information flows, for example in terms of coordination and synergy in achieving organizational goals.

Information originating from various sources must be managed properly through an appropriate procedure so that the information received can be understood clearly. Furthermore, information must be distributed properly because this will determine the success of achieving the work of an organization.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, information related to policies originating from leaders was socialized in meetings or work meetings online through the media, such as using zoom meetings, WhatsApp groups, the Komnas HAM YouTube channel, the Komnas HAM website, the Komnas HAM response podcast and Komnas HAM RI social media. For information originating from employees, it can be conveyed through the WhatsApp group, monthly coordination meetings for the Promotion of Human Rights can even be conveyed directly via private WhatsApp messages. Meanwhile, diagonal or cross-sectoral information

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is conveyed through the monthly coordination meeting of Komnas HAM RI which is attended by all Work Sector of Komnas HAM RI.

Based on field findings analysed by organizational information theory, it was found that information is managed according to the source and destination of the information in three forms of organizational information flow. Each current has a different procedure. In the process of exchanging information to produce optimal performance of the Bureau of Support for the Promotion of Human Rights of the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights, a conducive climate for organizational communication is needed. A conducive organizational communication climate can be achieved with the components of Support (Supportiveness), Participatory Decision Making (Participation Decision Making), Honesty, Confidence and Credibility (Trust, Confidence, Credibility), Openness and Candor (Openness and Candor), Work Goals from High Performance Goals to appropriate conflict management within the framework of individual diversity at the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau.

4. Conclusion

The Human Rights Promotion Support Bureau can boost employee productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic. These policies include implementing a flexible work system (WFH/WFO), providing open and participatory communication spaces at every opportunity, rewarding employees by being actively involved in activities, respecting opinions and providing mutual support, as well as wise conflict management. Making the organizational communication climate more comfortable and having a huge positive impact on morale and performance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In creating an organizational communication climate, leaders are expected to better understand the various characteristics of each employee. Leaders are expected to be able to follow up on suggestions and input more quickly, paying attention to employee career clarity, provision of better facilities and infrastructure, especially for employees with disabilities.

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