

## THE EFFECT OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLE FOR HANDLING COVID-19 AND NATIONAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY ON THE ADAPTATION OF NEW HABITS AMONG JAKARTA PEOPLE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT

The importance of the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery (KPCPEN) plays the role of Public Relations in the adaptation process the new habits of Indonesian society, especially Jakarta, are very critical. The challenges faced by KPCPEN in encouraging the adaptation of this behavior require a good Public Relations strategy. In this study, a study was conducted on the role of Public Relations carried out by KPCPEN on the adaptation of new habits of the people of Jakarta. The purpose of this study is to find out whether there is an influence on the role of Public Relations carried out by KPCPEN in the process of adapting to new habits. The results showed that there was a significant influence of the role of Public Relations carried out by KPCPEN on the adaptation of new habits of the people of Jakarta. In the crisis conditions faced, KPCPEN can overcome problems to encourage people to adopt new habitual behaviors that are very important during the Covid-19 pandemic and in the future.

**Keywords:** *public relations; behavioural adoption; Covid -19 pandemic*

### INTRODUCTION

Not finished facing the infodemic in the community, where accurate information is mixed with misinformation, resulting in a decrease in public trust, in early 2020 the Indonesian people were faced with a complex problem, namely the Covid -19 pandemic that is sweeping the world. Covid -19 (Corona Virus Diseases – 2019), is the official name of the disease identified by the World Health Organization (WHO), bringing people to uncomfortable conditions. The Covid-19 pandemic affected not only public health but also economic conditions, where the economy was stopped due to the severity of the Covid -19 pandemic situation. People who rely on daily income become confused and worried because economic activity has stopped to maintain health in the face of the Covid -19 pandemic.

To be able to help the community face and go through the Covid-19 pandemic effectively, the Indonesian government has formed a committee aimed at implementing, supervising, ensuring, and taking policies to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic and the national economic recovery faster, so that it can immediately rise from these conditions so that the nation's growth can proceed as planned. With these situations and conditions come the challenges of public communication. As is also the case in various parts of the world, for example, regarding the term social distancing, our society also interprets it as social distancing, creating a tendency to close itself socially. As a result, WHO must urge the world to change the use of the term so as not to understand that to avoid Covid-19 people must cut off social contact with others. Therefore, the use of the term 'Physical Distancing' is considered more appropriate, namely maintaining physical distance from one another, without being socially separated. Not to mention the information pandemic problem, false health information, especially Covid-19, became the most reported by the Public Information Office, Communication, Informatics and Statistics Office of DKI Jakarta Province in August 2020. As reported by liputan6.com (02/09/2020), 17 health hoaxes went viral and circulated on social media in August 2020. There are at least 5 hoaxes that are in the spotlight in DKI Jakarta in August. There was even information circulating that DKI Jakarta is a black zone for Covid-19, so the Deputy Governor of DKI Jakarta, Ahmad Riza Patria denied this by stating that the entire Capital City area was not included in the black zone of the coronavirus or Covid-19. Then a chain message circulated on the WhatsApp conversation application about the appeal of the sub-district head in DKI Jakarta.

The advisory is related to the DKI Jakarta PSBB due to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, which is then after being checked on the official website of the DKI Jakarta Provincial Informatics and Statistics Communication Service. Communication challenges that arise during the Covid-19 pandemic show that communication has an important role. So that the role carried out by the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery (KPCPEN) is very crucial. KPCPEN carries out Public Relations activities to manage communication between organizations and the public in a planned manner to influence public views with responsible actions.

Influencing public attitudes is a big challenge of communication, namely how a message can affect attitudes and encourage behavior change. Behavioral adoption is the application or use of an idea or idea conveyed through communication in the form of a message. The idea or ideas referred to in this study are communication submitted by the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery (KPCPEN) regarding the adaptation of new habits. This is the key to the government's success in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, namely with effective communication that can encourage people to adapt to new habits. It is important to know how the role of public relations of the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery affects the adaptation of new habits of the people of Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To examine the influential role of the Public Relations Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery on the adaptation of new habits of the People of Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic, researchers conducted a literature review related to the role of public relations and the process of adopting the behaviour. This is descriptive research with a quantitative approach to describe

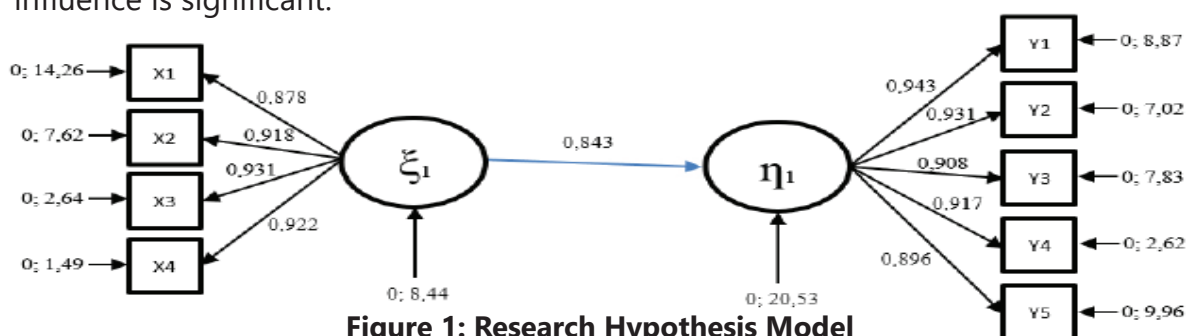
and explain systematically, factually, and accurately the facts and traits of certain populations or objects (Kriyantono, 2020). This study examines the effectiveness or success of messages in communication programs. The success of this study is that the messages conveyed can encourage the process of adapting to new habits. The researcher then connects or searches for causation between two or more concepts (variables) to be studied. The research method used uses the survey method, where the survey method is a quantitative research method using a questionnaire as an instrument in collecting data (Kriyantono, 2020). The population in this study refers to the results of research that have been conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in the APJII Internet Survey Report, 2019-2020 (Q2), showing that internet users in Indonesia reached 196.7 million people. Meanwhile, the number of internet users in DKI Jakarta is 8.9 million people. Internet users in this area became the population of the study.

This study used the Non-Probability Sampling and use the Purposive Sampling technique because the population members who will be used as respondents must be selected based on certain criteria made by the researcher based on the research objectives (Kriyantono, 2020). These criteria must support the research objectives and be based on scientific reasons, in this case, to seek the role of the Public Relations Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery that affects the adaptation of new habits of the People of Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, to find out and find out how the role of the Public Relations Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery on the adaptation of new habits of the people of Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic, an SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) statistical analysis was carried out using the CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As many as 100 people participated as respondents to this study, and the results of the statistical analysis with SEM led to a more in-depth analysis related to the results of the hypothesis obtained based on the statistical test. The research continued by analyzing the results of statistical tests on how the role of Public Relations of the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery on the adaptation of new habits of the People of Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on the analysis of the regression weight path from the Variable Role of Public Relations to Adaptation to New Habit Adaptation shows a value of 2.440.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Public Relations Role variable affects the Adaptation of New Habits by 2,440. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted because its influence is significant.



It can be seen in Figure 1 of the Research Hypothesis Model that the data that has been collected from respondents shows the results of regression, residual error, and regression paths. In the KSI 1 variable, it can be seen that the regression path to the indicator shows results, namely to X1 of 0.878; X2 of 0.918; X3 is 0.931; X4 is 0.922 and in the variable ETA 1, it can be seen that the regression path to Y1 shows a result of 0.943; to Y2 by 0.931; Y3 of 0.908; Y4 was 0.917 and Y5 was 0.896. The results obtained from the model test in table 1 showed that the probability value obtained was 0.001 with a degree of freedom of 26 and then a chi-square of 54.777 was obtained. In this study the probability value obtained was 0.001 less than 0.05 therefore the significance value was received. In other words, researchers can state that the estimates of parameters affected by identification controls are significant at the level of 0.05. Achieved conformity of hypothesis testing in the installation of the model.

**Table 1: Result 1**

Computation of degrees of freedom: (Default Model)		
Number of distinct sample moments	:	45
Number of distinct parameters to be estimated	:	19
Degrees of freedom (45 - 19)	:	26
Minimum was achieved		Model Fit
Chi-square	=	54,777
Degrees of freedom	=	26
Probability level	=	0,001

Source: Processed by Researchers with AMOS

**Table 2: Result 2**

Regression Weights		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result	
The role of Public Relations	→	<b>Adaptation to New Habit</b>	2,440	0,215	11,350	***	Accepted

Source: Processed by Researchers with AMOS

Analysis of the regression weight path from the Public Relations Role variable to The Adaptation of New Habits by 2,440. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Public Relations Role variable affects the Adaptation of New Habits by 2,440. Thus, the hypothesis is accepted because its influence is significant.

After conducting the hypothesis test, the researcher then conducted a correlation test between dimensions, which aimed to find out how each manifest variable of an exogenous latent variable was able to influence the manifest variable derived from the endogenous latent variable. This process helps researchers in more in-depth discussions and finding conclusions and suggestions in research.

**Table 3: Inter-Dimensional Correlation Test Results**

Variable		Endogen				
		Adaptation to New Habit				
Eksogen		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
The role of Public Relations	X1	0,676	0,679	0,721	0,704	0,695
	X2	0,732	0,724	0,773	0,773	0,731
	X3	0,657	0,669	0,740	0,714	0,686
	X4	0,702	0,684	0,759	0,749	0,734

Source: Processed by Researchers with AMOS

The Effect of the Role of Public Relations on the Adaptation of New Habits Refers to the data from the analysis of the influence of exogenous latent variables The role of Public Relations on the endogenous latent variables of New Habit Adaptation shows acceptable results. This is illustrated by the results of the hypothesis test on the Role of Public Relations in the Adaptation of New Habits which received an estimated value of 2,440. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Public Relations Role variable affects the Adaptation of New Habits by 2,440. Then, the influence of the Role of Public Relations on the Adaptation of New Habits is significant.

Then the results of the correlation between the manifest variables can be seen as the result of the value of the correlation coefficient of each dimension in the Public Relations Role variable with the New Habit Adaptation variable. In the manifest variable X1 about Communication Technicians, the Y1 variable about Awareness has a value of 0.676 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Then the comparison with the manifest variable Y2 about Interest has a value of 0.679 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Furthermore, the comparison with the manifest variable Y3 about Evaluation has a value of 0.721 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation.

The manifest variable Y4 about Trial has a value of 0.704 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. And in the manifest variable Y5 about Adoption has a value of 0.695 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Based on these results, it can be seen that the role of Public Relations in the dimension of Communication Technicians towards The Adaptation of New Habits affects strongly each dimension, namely Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. This indicates that the role of Public Relations as a Communication Technician has been very good because it has succeeded in influencing Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. In other words, the role of Public Relations as a Communication Technician influences or encourages one to adapt to new habits.

The manifest variable X2 about Expert Prescriber and its correlation to the Y1 variable about Awareness has a value of 0.732 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Then the Y2 variable about Interest has a value of 0.724 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Furthermore, the comparison with the manifest variable Y3 about Evaluation has a value of 0.773 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. The manifest variable Y4 about Trial has a value of 0.773 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. And in the manifest variable Y5 about Adoption has a value of 0.731 which can be concluded to have a

strong correlation. Based on these results, it can be seen that the role of Public Relations in the Expert Prescriber dimension towards the Adaptation of New Habits has a strong influence on each dimension, namely Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. This indicates that the role of Public Relations as an Expert Prescriber is very good because it has succeeded in influencing Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. In other words, the role of Public Relations as Expert Prescriber influences or encourages to adapt to new habits.

The manifest variable X3 about communication facilitators and their correlation to the Y1 variable about Awareness has a value of 0.657 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Then the Y2 variable about Interest has a value of 0.669 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Furthermore, the comparison with the manifest variable Y3 about Evaluation has a value of 0.740 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. The manifest variable Y4 about Trial has a value of 0.714 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. And in the manifest variable Y5 about Adoption has a value of 0.686 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation.

Based on these results, it can be seen that the role of Public Relations in the dimension of Communication Facilitator towards The Adaptation of New Habits has a strong influence on each dimension, namely Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. This indicates that the role of Public Relations as a Communication Facilitator has been very good because it has succeeded in influencing Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. In other words, the role of Public Relations as a Communication Facilitator influences or encourages to adapt to new habits. In the manifest variable X4 about the Problem-Solving Facilitator and its correlation to the Y1 variable about Awareness has a value of 0.702 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Then the Y2 variable about Interest has a value of 0.684 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Furthermore, the comparison with the manifest variable Y3 about Evaluation has a value of 0.759 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation.

The manifest variable Y4 about Trial has a value of 0.749 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. And in the manifest variable Y5 about Adoption has a value of 0.734 which can be concluded to have a strong correlation. Based on these results, it can be seen that the role of Public Relations in the dimension of Problem-Solving Facilitator towards The Adaptation of New Habits has a strong influence on each dimension, namely Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. This indicates that the role of Public Relations as a Problem-Solving Facilitator has been very good because it has succeeded in influencing Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption. In other words, the role of Public Relations as a Problem-Solving Facilitator influence or encourages to adapt to new habits.

The results of the statistical test provide an overview of a significant influence between the exogenous latent variables of the Role of Public Relations and the endogenous latent variables of New Habit Adaptation. This is reinforced by looking at the correlation of each dimension in the variable. Any relationship between manifest variables as a whole show that there is a strong influence. Looking at these results, it can be concluded that the role of Public Relations has a significant effect on the adaptation of new habits as a whole. These results can be used as good findings to



be a reference in developing communication programs in the future. This influence, which overall shows significant things, explains how important the role of Public Relations is in encouraging the process of Adapting to New Habits in society. The findings of this study become a reference for researchers in providing conclusions in the study. In this section, we see how the role of Public Relations carried out by KPCPEN in encouraging the Process of Adapting to New Habits.

Based on data analysis, it shows that the role of Public Relations has a significant influence on the Adaptation of New Habits. The interesting thing is that in this context the role of Public Relations has a strong influence on all aspects of New Habit Adaptation. His roles as Communication Technician, Expert Prescriber, Communication Facilitator, and Problem-Solving Facilitator have a strong influence on Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption.

This reinforces the notion of how the role of Public Relations becomes key to dealing with cognitive dissonance, Festinger proposes that individuals can reduce dissonance through several pathways, but the literature on dissonance is largely centered on changing attitudes (McGrath: 2017). The role carried out is a comprehensive step to overcome the discomfort caused by uncertainty during the Covid-19 pandemic. Part of advancing the theory and practice of PR is to effectively address and combat the demoralizing behaviors that cause emotional work, and affirm the value of PR within academics (Sommerfeldt & Kent: 2020).

This proves that it is increasingly necessary to view Public Relations as a strategic role. This significant influence does not seem easy, because at first many miscommunications increased cognitive dissonance in society -such as the explanation of social distancing- which made handling Covid-19 not so effective. If communication does not have a meaningful impact on cognitive dissonance. Thus, management should consider this fact as a key factor and pay attention to their communication program with other activities such as building trust to strengthen their communication (Sharifi & Esfidani: 2013).

Paying attention to communication and building public trust is the main focus of KPCPEN in encouraging people to be able to Adapt to New Habits. The communication program that is carried out looks comprehensive when looking at the structure and efforts to collaborate by conducting Multi-stakeholder Engagement. Multi-stakeholder Engagement can mean different things under different circumstances, essentially involving the structured involvement of all relevant state and non-state actors in policy discussions. The need is urgent in that the topic is complex and has many dependencies, to which no single actor may have a thorough answer (Alexander et al. 2020).

These communication policies or programs have proven effective in providing a significant influence on the Adaptation of New Habits, we know that KPCPEN has a Policy Committee that can immediately issue policies to accelerate the handling of Covid-19. So that the role he performs as a Communication Technician, Expert Prescriber, Communication Facilitator, and Problem-Solving Facilitator has a significant influence on changing attitudes in this case Adaptation to New Habits during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## CONCLUSION

Refers to the results of a study that states that the role of Public Relations carried out by the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery (KPCPEN) on the process of adopting new habit adaptation behaviors in the people of Jakarta during the Covid-19 pandemic has a significant influence. These findings need to be explored further in various aspects. This needs to be done to find out in-depth why KPCPEN has succeeded in encouraging the adoption process of new habit adaptation behaviors.

Researchers see the need to look at the cognitive side of society at that time, whether there was dissonance in its cognitive, and how society overcomes the dissonance. Seeing how the condition of public communication when the Covid-19 pandemic entered Indonesia where at that time there was an information pandemic that resulted in important information mixed with misinformation.

In this condition, there can be discomfort in people's cognition due to the uncertainty caused during the Covid-19 pandemic and existing public communication. A mismatch between information and people's knowledge of Covid-19 can lead to distrust of information they should understand. Festinger in (Kriyantono, 2017) explains that each individual has two elements in himself, namely: cognition (belief or knowledge or perception or attitude) and behavior.

This understanding is very important for public relations practitioners, effective communication is needed to be able to persuade people to adapt to new habits, and persuasion will be successful if the level of dissonance is reduced. Communication that is carried out and encouraged by collaboration must not only be clear but also consistent in conveying steps for the community to adapt.

So that the information conveyed not only has benefits, but also contains the value of honesty, interest, and optimism. Because of the information pandemic condition, it will make it difficult for public relations to work if you cannot understand the cognitive dissonance that exists in society and fight misinformation circulating in society. This research can be a roadmap for further research by looking at the role of public relations in overcoming cognitive dissonance in society and countering misinformation circulating Covid-19. Strategies and an active role in public relations are needed in facing this challenge. With studies that look at how crucial the role of public relations is in practice; we can provide a view on phenomena that may be able to occur again or at least have a similar context of the problem.

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