

# **‘New Normal’ Branding of Local Government in Pandemic Covid-19 Era**

## **(Cases Studies at DKI Jakarta, Jawa Barat, and Jawa Tengah)**

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**ABSTRACT.** This article describes the dynamics of branding the 'new normal' concept carried out by local governments in three provinces in Indonesia. Using content analysis research methods, the article describes three personal accounts of the Governors of DKI Jakarta (Anies Baswedan), West Java (Ridwan Kamil), and Central Java (Ganjar Pranowo). The results showed that there was a communication pattern between three regional heads (Governors) in conveying information related to the 'new normal'. There are three aspects to analyze, the dimensions of communication, tone of information, and types of information. The regional head figure also has a strategic role as a communicator by their personal branding who connects important messages and information to the public. Not infrequently, regional heads are actually able to attract public attention through the use of their personal accounts.

**KEYWORDS:** new normal; branding; communication dimensions; information tone;

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

During the current pandemic, several regional heads have their own way of interpreting and campaigning for the 'New Normal' program in their area. In this situation, the establishment of these rules is important in addition to reducing the rate of the spread of COVID-19 and implementing rules that regulate people in their daily activities.

In communicating this new rule, social media can be said to be one of the communication media that is quite effective and efficient in disseminating information. Apart from the ease with which its features can be accessed regardless of space and time barriers, the distribution of usage in Indonesia can be said to be quite massive. Research results from We Are Social (Kemp, 2019) state that 91% of Indonesians use the internet to actively access social media. This data also shows that Instagram is the fourth most accessed media, apart from Youtube, Facebook, and Whatsapp.

Regarding the use of social media as a political medium, Deihl, Weeks, and Gil de Zúñiga, (2016) mention that social media has now become a deliberative space that can facilitate persuasion results. These persuasive messages can be used for certain purposes, for example to campaign for a new policy or rule that needs to be obeyed by the wider community (for example, to campaign for the rules of life during the new normal or new habits) or to increase the electability of politicians during the wake election, regional elections, or the presidential election.

In the midst of the current pandemic, the electability level of several regional heads during the Covid-19 pandemic has increased quite significantly. The director of the survey institute from Indometer explained that Ganjar's electability rose from the previous 9.7 percent to 15.4 percent. Meanwhile, Ridwan Kamil's position doubled from 5.2 percent to 11.3 percent and East Java Governor Khofifah Indar Parawansa also rose from 2.3 percent to 4.1 percent (Wibowo, 2020). In fact, several regional heads occupy the top five positions in the electability level survey conducted on 11-20 July 2020 by Indometer.

The same thing was revealed by a survey conducted by the Indonesian Political Indicators Survey Institute conducted on 13-16 July 2020. Based on the Indonesian Political Indicators survey, the

electability of several regional heads has increased and places the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, in first place at 16.2 %, then DKI Governor Anies Baswedan 15%, and the General Chairperson of the Gerindra Party Prabowo Subianto 13.5%. Although, there is a declining electability of regional heads, namely the governor of East Java, Khofifah Indar Parawansa (Hutabarat, 2020). From the survey mentioned, the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic has political implications, especially at the level of electability of regional head figures.

The regional head, as a public figure, has a self-identity that is represented on various social media. These figures realize the importance of the identity formed and its popularity in cyberspace, which can be seen from the number of followers, likes, and comments in each periodic upload. By assuming this, they also realize that they have an influence in persuading or the community to enter a new normal era or with the aim of increasing electability. So in the context of handling Covid-19 in Indonesia, amid the uncertainty of local governments in responding to this crisis, this paper aims to further describe how regional heads use social media to communicate ideas and forms of the 'new normal' on their social media. This article will attempt to answer the question of how is the new normal branding communication carried out by regional heads during the Covid-19 pandemic?

The research conducted as the basis of this article uses a positivistic paradigm with a quantitative approach as the methodological basis. The content analysis method is a typical method to be used in researching media content because it is able to provide tools, as well as provide useful steps for dissecting media content (Prajarto, 2010). The description of the article will explore three aspects, namely, the dimensions of communication, the tone of information, and the type of information conveyed by the regional head related to the 'new normal' so that it can describe the communication pattern of regional heads on social media. These findings will be abstracted to see the relevance of the three-aspect communication model. good leaders in times of crisis (McKinsey, 2020).

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Branding as *Strategic Communication*

Keller (2008) defines a brand as “a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of these, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller group to differentiate them from those of competitors”. In this context, the brand is attached to the product being sold or offered. Burkit (2002) mentions that there is not too much difference between "branding" and "marketing". Therefore, Burkit put branding as a marketing strategy and tactic. Brought in a political context, branding then becomes a strategy for political actors to market their political ideas. Keller (2008) maps the branding strategy process management in the following chart.

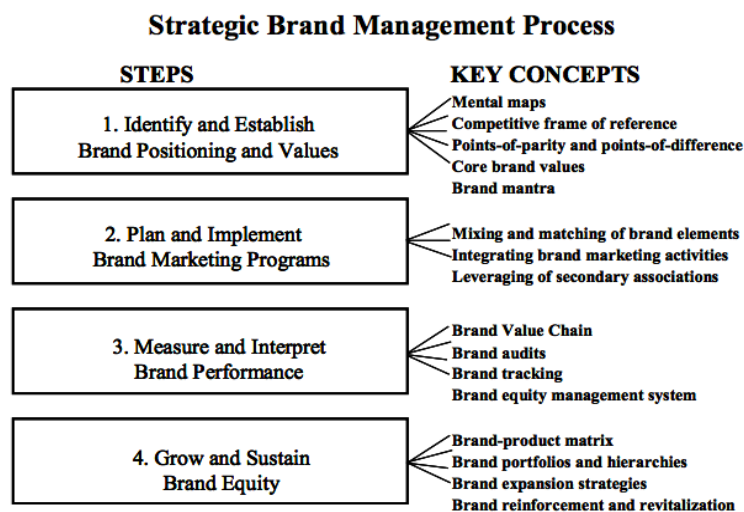


Figure 1: Strategic Brand Management Process

Keller (2008) also mentions that in branding, rational and emotional actions are very important. The main factor in branding lies in the effort to highlight the difference with other competitors. The more you can make a difference and highlight your advantages, the more successful the branding process can be. The strength of a branding will lie in how the consumer feels ownership of the brand. In this political context, what is known as partisanship, is how the public can identify their political views on certain candidates or political parties. Burkitt (2002) mentions that from the consumer's point of view, political brands are "almost always psychological constructs". Because it is always a psychological construction, the strategy used is very important. This strategy will greatly influence how the brand of a politician or political actor can become top of mind in the public's mind. The goal, of course, is to gain the trust of the public, which in the context of general elections is manifested in the form of voting support.

## 2.2. Political Branding on Public Policy by Social Media

The development of information and communication technology today, especially social media, has an influence on political communication. Social media is not only used as an effective and efficient means of exchanging information but is also used as a strategic tool of persuasion in politics. An example can be seen in the use of social media by political figures during the presidential or regional elections several years ago. Politicians use social media to carry out political branding activities to boost electability rates. This is done by building self-image through social media, for example showing videos and photos of daily activities or providing ideas or ideas that criticize government policies.

Related to branding, Basu & Wang (2009) explain that branding activity is the process of creating the identity of a product. Milewicz and Milewicz (2014) state that a brand is a series of dynamic interactions of various consumer-oriented management elements. Meanwhile, when referring to a broader explanation, Holt (in Milewicz and Milewicz, 2014) explains that branding is an activity that aims to influence public or consumer perceptions. Through branding, this perception is directed to follow the brand construction created by the message maker. Not only in the realm of economics or business, but this is also closely related to the political realm. It is not uncommon for all political figures to carry out branding activities for their self-image or party. Kotler and Kotler (1999) mention that political branding is built based on a principal statement that political parties and political figures can be managed like a "product". In politics this product can vary, mentioning that branding is an activity that intersects with the political area, especially in the field of electoral politics, political parties, public regulations, branded products used in government, and the state (Marsh and Fawcett, 2011).

## 2. BRANDING OF NEW NORMAL AS STRATEGIC BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THE RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of research data processing show that the number of uploads is 354. The largest number is from the account of the Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo with a total of 144 or 41%, followed by Ridwan Kamil with 121 uploads or 34%, and Anies Baswedan with 89 upload 25%. Ganjar Pranowo's Twitter account is the account with the highest number of Twitter uploads (90) and Anies Baswedan's account with the highest number of Instagram uploads (64). The difference in the number of uploads on the two social media is not much different, namely 176 on Twitter and 178 on Instagram. The following is the number of uploads from each governor related to the new normal, That is analyzing from each governor's account on social media.

Table 1: The Total Uploading of Governors

No	Head of Government Account	Twittering total point	Instagram uploading	Total uploading
1	Anies Baswedan	25	64	89
2	Ridwan Kamil	61	60	121
3	Ganjar Pranowo	90	54	144
	Jumlah	176	178	354

### 3.1. Social Media Account's Anies Baswedan

Based on observations using machines, the findings of the use of Twitter and Instagram social media accounts on Anies Baswedan's account related to the New Normal from May to October are as follow :

Table 2:  
Twitter of Anies Baswedan on New Normal issue from May – Oct 2020

No	Bulan	Dimensi				Jenis Informasi			Tone Informasi			Total		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2		3	
1	Mei	4	1		3		2	6		3	8			8
2	Juni	1	1		4		1	5			1			6
3	Juli	1			2		2	1			3			3
4	Agustus	2					2	2			2			2
5	September	2			3		2	3			5			5
6	Oktober				1		1				1			1
	Jumlah	10	2		13		8	17			20			25

Table 3:  
Instagram post of Anies Baswedan on New Normal issue from May – Octpber 2020

No	Bulan	Dimensi				Jenis Informasi			Tone Informasi			Total		
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2		3	
1	Mei	6	1		5		9	3		3	12		1	12
2	Juni	4	1	1	4		9	1			10			10
3	Juli	5	1		3		8	1			9			9
4	Agustus	2			7		6	3			9			9
5	September	4	2		7		9	4			13			13
6	Oktober	1			10		10	1			11			11
	Jumlah	22	5	1	36		51	13			63		1	64

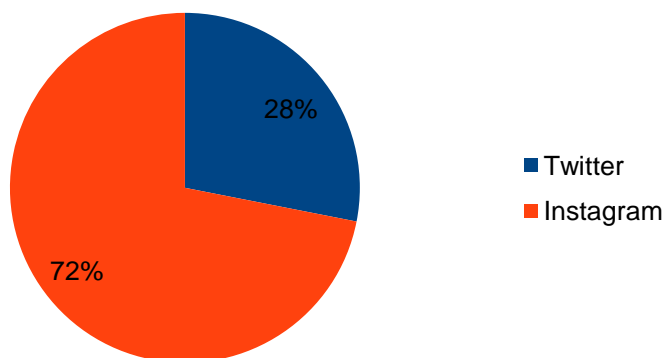


Figure 2: Uploding social media account of Anies Baswedan

In terms of the number of uploads, Anies Baswedan's account appears to be more active on Instagram social media. This is indicated by the number of uploads on Instagram accounts which reached 64 or 72% and Twitter only 25 uploads or 28%. Uploads related to the new normal are most intensively submitted in May, with a total of 8 uploads on Twitter media and 12 uploads on Instagram accounts. From the trend of numbers, there is a difference between Twitter and Instagram accounts. On Twitter, it appears that the number of uploads continues to decline from May to October. While on Instagram, the number decreased but not significantly, then there was an increase in September. In terms of frequency, uploads related to the new normal on twitter show that there is a downward movement. Unlike those on Twitter, uploads appear to be on average between 9-13 uploads per month.

Patterns on Twitter social media, the most widely discussed dimensions are the socio-cultural dimension (13), adjusting information type (17), and serious tone of information (25). On Instagram, the socio-cultural dimension (36), the type of instructing information (51), and the tone of the serious information (63). If you add them up, then from the total number of the two social media as many as 89 uploads, the

largest dimension is socio-cultural with 49 uploads or 53% the largest instructing information with 59 uploads or 66%, and the tone of serious information with 88 uploads or 99%.

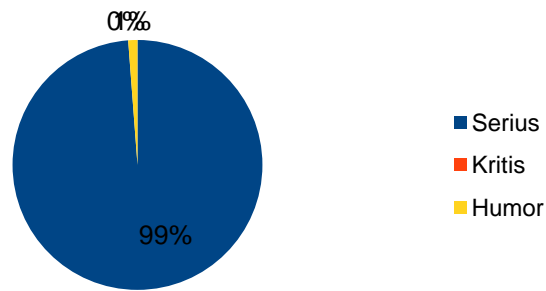


Figure 3:  
Accumulation of Presentation Dimension, Form, and Information Tone Uploading by Anis Baswedan's Social Media Account (Information Tone)

A fairly similar pattern was found in both media, although there were differences in the type of information, which was also filled in on both media. These two social media accounts do not touch on the political dimension, the type of internalizing information, and the tone of critical information. Indicated by numbers that are empty in both tables.

Based on observations, the pattern of numbers looks uniform on both social media. Starting from the highest number of uploads on the socio-cultural dimension and serious tone of information on both social media. The difference is seen in the type of information column, where most types of information on Twitter are adjusting information and Instagram is instructing information.

### 3.2. Social Media Account's Ridwan Kamil

In both Ridwan Kamil's accounts, the level of activity using Instagram and Twitter media can be said to be almost the same. This can be seen from the number of uploads that are almost the same, Instagram 61 or 50% and Twitter 60 uploads or 50%. Most of the uploads related to the new normal were communicated in June, where on the Twitter account there were 25 uploads and 22 uploads on Instagram. The trend in the number of uploads on both social media shows the same pattern, namely an increase in the number in June and a significant decrease in the months after that until October. Lets we see the chat below:

Table 4:  
Uploading Twitter of Ridwan Kamil with New Normal Issues on May – Oct 2020

Bulan	Dimensi					Jenis Informasi			Tone Informasi			Total
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2	3	
Mei	11	1		3		2	10	3	14	1		15
Juni	18	4		3		4	18	3	22		3	25
Juli	5	1	2	2			10		10			10
Agustus	1			2			3		3			3
September	3			2		2	3		5			5
Oktober	3						3		3			3
Jumlah	41	6	2	12		8	47	6	57	1	3	61

Table 5:  
Uploading Instagram of Ridwan Kamil with New Normal Issues on May – Oct 2020

No	Bulan	Dimensi					Jenis Informasi			Tone Informasi			Total
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2	3	
1	Mei	4			7		4	7		8		3	11
2	Juni	13	4		5		7	15		18		4	22
3	Juli	9	1	2	5		3	10	2	13		2	15
4	Agustus	1			2		2	1		2		1	3
5	September	1	2		1		1	3		4			4
6	Oktober	3			1		3	3		4		2	5
	Jumlah	31	7	2	21		20	39	2	49		12	60

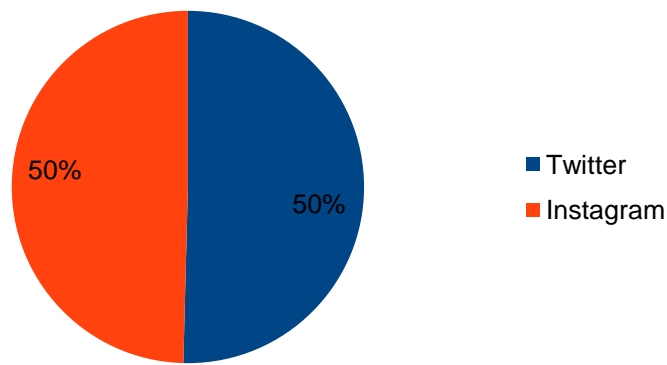


Figure 4: Percentage of Uploading Ridwan Kamil's Social Media Account

On his twitter account, Ridwan Kamil's account mostly discusses the health dimension (41), and types of adjusting information (47), with a serious tone of information (57). A similar pattern can also be seen on Ridwan Kamil's Instagram account. The most widely discussed dimensions are the health dimension (31), the type of adjusting information (39), and the tone of the serious information (49). Even so, Ridwan Kamil's communication on his twitter account seems more varied, in the sense that this account only does not touch the political dimension (column 5 on the next page).

If you observe and add up the number of uploads from the two tables above (121 uploads) and look at the largest number, you will get the number of health dimensions as much as 72 uploads or 59%, types of instructing information as many as 86 uploads or 68% and serious information tone as many as 106 uploads or 88% .

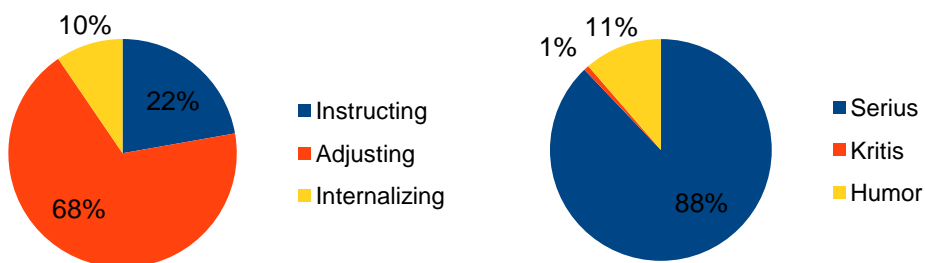


Figure 5: The Accumulation of Percentage Dimension, Form (left), and Information Tone (right) Uploading by Ridwan Kamil's Social Media

As a side note, although the numbers are different on the two social media, they have a similar pattern. In both social media, the most widely discussed information dimension is health, with the type of adjusting information and the tone of the information being serious. In addition, there is also a uniform pattern in the variation of information on the dimensions, type and tone of information.

### 3.3. Social Media Account's Ganjar Pranowo

In communicating the new normal, based on observations on the two Ganjar Pranowo accounts, it appears that Ganjar Pranowo is more active on his twitter account. This is indicated by a significant difference in the number of uploads, between 90 on Instagram and 54 on Twitter. These two accounts

were most active in communicating the new normal in May, where on the twitter account there were 33 uploads and 22 uploads on Instagram. This number continues to decline, although there is an upward trend from the previous month in September. Even so, the number of uploads on Twitter is the highest number of the other two governors.

Table 6:  
Uploading of Ganjar Pranowo’s Twitter with New Normal Issues  
On May – Oct 2020

No	Bulan	Dimensi					Jenis Informasi			Tone Informasi			Total
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2	3	
1	Mei	10	6	1	14		4	29	6	31		2	33
2	Juni	7	1		3		6	5		4		7	11
3	Juli	5		5			3	5	2	8		2	10
4	Agustus	9	2	1			4	2	1	9		3	12
5	September	7	4	1		3	5	9	1	14		1	15
6	Oktober	5	2	1	1		3	6		6		3	9
	Jumlah	43	15	9	18	3	25	56	10	72		24	90

Table 7: Uploading of Ganjar Pranowo’s Instagram with New Normal Issues  
On May – Oct 2020

No	Bulan	Dimensi					Jenis Informasi			Tone Informasi			Total
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	2	3	
1	Mei	7	3	1	11		2	19	1	14		8	22
2	Juni	3	1		3		1	6		5		2	7
3	Juli	3		1			2	1	1	2		2	4
4	Agustus	2	1	2	1		3	2	1	5		1	6
5	September	5	1	1		1	5	3		7		1	8
6	Oktober	4	1	1	1		3	4		4		3	7
	Jumlah	24	7	6	16	1	16	35	3	37		17	54

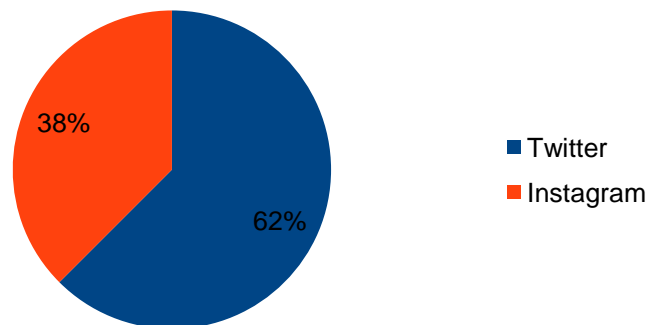


Figure 6: Total Percentage Uploading  
Ganjar Pranowo’s Social Media Account

On his Twitter account, Ganjar Pranowo's account mostly discusses the health dimension (43), types of adjusting information (56) and serious tone of information (72). The same pattern was also found on Instagram social media accounts with the most widely communicated dimensions being health (24), adjusting information type (35), and serious tone of information (37). If it is added up based on the uploads on the two social media, then of the 144 uploads of new normal communication that enter the health dimension, 67 or 47%, types of instructing information are 91 uploads or 63%, and serious information tone is 109 uploads or 77%.

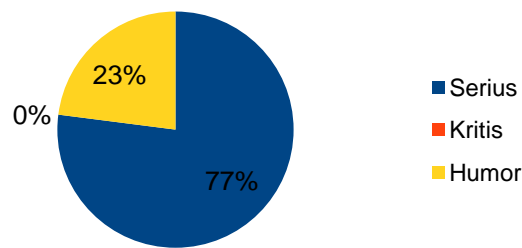


Figure 7: Percentage Uploading Ganjar Pranowo's Social Media Account (Information tone)

Based on the observations in the two tables above, it appears that the pattern of the highest number on both social media is uniform. The largest number on both social media is the health dimension, the type of adjusting information and the serious tone of information.

An interesting note from this account is the humor information tone pattern which is the second most common in all accounts. Indicating that in conveying the new normal, Ganjar quite often inserts jokes or jokes in his social media uploads. Another thing is that there are uploads about politics on both accounts, namely Twitter 3 uploads and Instagram 1 upload.

### 3. CONCLUSION

In communicating the new normal, each regional head has his own choice of social media. From what has been explained, Anies Baswedan tends to use Instagram, Ganjar Pranowo uses Twitter and Ridwan Kamil uses both media in equal/equal amounts. Of the six accounts from the three regional heads discussed, the most active account is Ganjar Pranowo's Twitter account with 90 uploads.

Of the three regional heads, Ridwan Kamil and Ganjar Pranowo, most discussed the health dimension, followed by the socio-cultural dimension. This pattern is inversely proportional to Anies Baswedan's account. Anies Baswedan's account mostly discusses the socio-cultural aspect, followed by the health dimension. The pattern with the highest number seen in the three governors is a cross between health and social culture.

Regarding the type of information, Ridwan Kamil and Ganjar Pranowo tend to communicate in the form of adjusting. In contrast to Anies Baswedan who still explains more in the form of instruction. The three governors still have not touched on the type of internalizing information.

For the tone of information, of the three regional head accounts, Anies Baswedan's account mostly revealed uploads with a serious tone on Instagram media and both Anies Baswedan's accounts in general only used a serious tone (99%), and there was only one tone of humorous information. . Meanwhile, Ridwan Kamil's Twitter account looks the most varied in terms of the tone of information in the delivery, which is shown by the variation in the use of various tones.

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