



The Invisible Hand Program by PT Pertamina MOR IV to Educate and Increase Public Awareness on Subsidized 3Kg LPG

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the Invisible Hand, a cyber public relations program conducted by the Communication, Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility Unit of PT Pertamina (Persero) MOR IV to educate and to increase public awareness on the provision of subsidized 3Kg LPG in Central Java dan Yogyakarta Special Region. Originally intended for lower income households and micro-small businesses, the subsidized LPG is also enjoyed by higher income households and businesses which result in the scarcity of the LPG. PT Pertamina (Persero) MOR IV held the Invisible Hand program by using other parties' media to promote their mission. This study applied a qualitative research method by conducting participatory observation, interview and questionnaire for its data collection. It indicated that the Invisible Hand program was implemented through two strategies: social media campaigns and media relations. The social media campaigns were promoted by paid promotion through popular local Instagram accounts in Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region, and the media relations were executed through focus group discussion (FGD) with local journalists. Positive awareness and responses from the public were proven by positive Instagram



engagements. Through the media relations, a common understanding between PT Pertamina (Persero) MOR IV and the journalists was achieved, and the messages to educate the public were well-delivered by the media.

INTRODUCTION

Petroleum which turns into various fuel products is one of non-renewable resources. In Indonesia until 2007, kerosene was the main petroleum product for household consumption. Based on data from the Indonesian Statistics in 2007, kerosene for household consumption had reached 9.9 million kilolitres per year. The Indonesian Government subsidy for kerosene reached 40 trillion rupiah in 2006. Beside becoming a burden to the national budget, the use of kerosene as the main fuel of households had had negative impacts for the environment. To tackle these problems, in 2007 the Indonesian government released a policy of energy conversion from kerosene to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), which is cleaner and more sustainable for long term use.

Public announcements and campaigns on the benefit of using LPG as the substitution for kerosene for daily consumption were released by the government in 2007. In addition, it delegated PT Pertamina (Persero), a state-owned company which manages the energy sector including oil, gas and renewable energy, to manage, develop and distribute the LPG, especially 3Kg LPG for lower income households and micro-small businesses. According to Presidential Decree No. 104 2007 about the Provision, Distribution and Price Determination of 3Kg LPG, PT Pertamina (Persero) is the only state-owned company in Indonesia which is

given authority in the marketing and distribution of the LPG. More detailed distribution system to lower income households and micro-small businesses was legalized by Regulation No. 26 2009 issued by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources about the provision and distribution of subsidized LPG.

From the beginning, the 3 Kg LPG was intended to be distributed at a lower price since it was subsidized by the government. However, thanks to its lower price, households and businesses with middle and higher incomes also irresponsibly consumed the 3Kg LPG. The abuse of the subsidized LPG continued until late 2019 when scarcity of 3Kg LPG occurred in several big cities in Java. As reported in their official website, pertamina.com, in June 2019, a joint investigation between PT Pertamina MOR IV, Regional Industry and Trade Office of Kota Solo, and officials from Solo Police Office towards several restaurants in Kota Solo found that those business entities approximately consumed 300 tubes of 3Kg LPG per week, or equal to 36 metric tons per month. PT Pertamina MOR IV also conducted an investigation on the 3Kg LPG in Karesidenan Kedu area and found 254 tubes of 3Kg LPG in several big restaurants as reported by harianjogja.com (2019). With the population of Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region exceeding 35 millions (BPS, 2018), this subsidy abuse

may have burdened both PT Pertamina and central government expenditure.

PT Pertamina as the main distributor was often blamed for the shortage of 3Kg LPG. To solve this problem, PT Pertamina (Persero) needed to communicate to the public about the scarcity issue as well as educate and raise awareness on the importance of the subsidized LPG for lower income households and businesses. PT Pertamina MOR IV which is in charge of Pertamina marketing operations in Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region had conducted several campaign programs, and one of which was 'the Invisible Hand' as their new strategy to communicate with the public.

This study explores and analyzes the implementation of the Invisible Hand program by PT Pertamina MOR IV. The program is called "Invisible Hand" because it uses other parties' media to spread the actual information on the distribution mechanism of 3 Kg LPG in Indonesia. The campaigns did not mention Pertamina nor did they use the Pertamina logo in any campaign materials. The particular purpose of this strategy was that PT Pertamina MOR IV educated the public about real issues behind the subsidy and scarcity of 3Kg LPG in several areas of Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The use of other parties' media was intended to distance Pertamina away from public visibility and perception. The program had two strategies. First, PT Pertamina MOR IV used Instagram as the platform for information dissemination and campaigns. It applied paid promotion of social media campaigns through popular local Instagram accounts which had an influential impact and always shared up to date information in both regions. The second strategy was media relations by inviting some journalists of both regions into a focus group discussion to talk

about the distribution mechanism of 3Kg LPG in Indonesia.

Over time, the position of public relations in an organization has moved towards a more dynamic direction. Not only as "an image maker," public relations has transformed its role as an important part in a management function. Jefskin (2020) emphasizes that "public relations practice is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its public." This definition implies that the task of public relations is not only maintaining the image of an organization, but also making a well-planned and persistent strategy as an effort to create and preserve the goodwill of an organization. Moreover, public relations must maintain a common understanding between the organization and the public for sustainable mutual relations.

Pertamina, a vital state-owned enterprise mandated with public service obligation from the central government in energy provision, must maintain sustainable public relations. Throughout energy policy changes, it must also communicate and educate the public regarding current energy issues which may affect the wellbeing of the nation. Therefore, it needs an effective and strategic communication concept to succeed.

According to Smith (2012), strategic communication is a name of a well-planned communication campaign deliberately carried out by an organization. It is always performed based on assessment and must be evaluated in the end. Furthermore, it manifests in strategic public relations. Holtz (2002) states that strategic public relations is conducted when all the public relations efforts are planned to influence business outcomes that are consistent with company objectives. In this case, PT



Pertamina MOR IV applied strategic public relations to maintain its business and organizational reputation. Then it performed cyber public relations through its Communication, Relations and CSR Unit.

Cyber public relations is a public relations activity performed through an internet connection which aims to maintain public trust and understanding toward an organization. Onggo (2004) states that cyber public relations activities can create three basic goals of digital public relations:

1. Relations: able to interact with various target audiences to build relations and corporate image;
2. Reputation: being an art of building an online reputation on an ongoing basis; and
3. Relevance: striving for online public relations initiatives to be relevant to corporate public targets.

In implementing the cyber public relations strategies, an organization has a variety of options in utilizing online platforms. Websites and social media are some of the most popular means due to their flexibility and shareability. In the case of LPG provision, when the price of 12Kg LPG was increased in 2014, Pertamina also conducted cyber public relations by conducting Kompasiana Blog Competition and inviting the third-party endorser on Kaskus (Gabrina & Suharyanti, 2014). Similar concept was implemented for the Invisible Hand program. However, instead of using blogs and internet forums, PT. Pertamina MOR IV utilized media relations strategy and paid promotion through social media, Instagram. Instagram was chosen since it is immensely popular among internet users in Indonesia. In 2019, the platform had 61,610,000 active users in Indonesia (Kompas, 2019), making it a feasible means for cyber public relations campaigns. Some media involved in the

media relations program are also in accessible online versions. They have official websites and social media pages supporting the dissemination and invisibility of the campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative research. Its data were collected by implementing participatory observation, interview and questionnaire. The participatory observation was held by directly experiencing and handling the Invisible Hand program during a two-month internship program at PT Pertamina (Persero) MOR IV in Semarang in 2019, particularly in the Communication, Relations and CSR Unit. The interview was conducted with the Manager and Junior Officer of Communication, Relations and CSR Unit of PT Pertamina MOR IV.

The interview was about the reason, execution and outcomes that PT Pertamina MOR IV expected through the program. The questionnaire was formulated in Google Form distributed to media crews who were involved in the focus group discussion (FGD) entitled "Mekanisme Distribusi LPG 3 Kg Tepat Sasaran (Mechanism of Targeted Distribution of 3 Kg LPG" on August 29th, 2019 at Grand Artos Hotel and Convention Center in Magelang. The questionnaire contained questions related to assessments and evaluations of the FGD event as well as points to check the understanding of its participants toward the 3Kg LPG distribution issues proposed by PT Pertamina MOR IV. Even though results of the questionnaire conveyed percentages and numbers, they were not meant to be discussed statistically. The percentages and numbers were interpreted qualitatively for additional data.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Invisible Hand Program

The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources released data in 2019 that the subsidy of 3Kg LPG reached 42.47 trillion rupiahs (DetikFinance, 2019). The over subsidy had become a burden for the national expenditure (APBN). PT Pertamina as the sole authorized producer of 3Kg LPG was also blamed for this distribution problem, especially after scarcity of 3Kg LPG emerged in several cities in Java. The reputation of PT Pertamina was at stake, and it needed to immediately take actions to communicate with the public regarding the subsidy issues. For Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region operational areas, PT Pertamina MOR IV decided to conduct the Invisible Hand program. As mentioned previously, the program utilized other parties' roles and media in the dissemination of actual information for the public about the provision and distribution mechanism of 3Kg LPG in Indonesia. The program was a campaign to educate and to increase public awareness of the subsidized LPG. Through the campaigns, PT Pertamina also intended to displace public prejudice which had positioned Pertamina as the only party responsible for 3Kg LPG scarcity.

According to Wilcox, Ault, Agee and Cameron (2000), some organizations create campaigns in order to solve the problems or situations that negatively affect the organization. Similarly, Gregory (2019) states that "the kind of objectives in public relations campaigns may be presented to: promote understanding, overcome misunderstanding, create awareness, inform, develop knowledge, displace

prejudice, encourage belief, and confirm a perception." PT Pertamina MOR IV hoped there would be public understanding and awareness resulting from the cyber public relations campaign through the Invisible Hand.

The Invisible Hand through Instagram

The emergence of social media has transformed the practice of corporate communications. Companies and organizations use social media to share corporate news, messages and achievements, for example, to their stakeholders. In other words, social media is an important means for strategic corporate communication. Breakenridge (2012) mentions that "communications and technology offer public relations professionals the potential to show their performance in a more strategic direction." The existence of social media has also created a new form of mass communication in which interpersonal interaction occurs between organizations and stakeholders. According to Watie (2011), there has been a mutual synergy between mass communication and interpersonal communication on social media posts where two-way interactions are seen between organizations and their online audience.

Therefore, social media is an effective means for cyber public relations practice. A study by Sweetster and Kelleher (2011) found that public relations practitioners, who were more influential in their fields and relative to others in the same group, gained advantages from the positive benefits of social media. Social media is also incorporated by public relations practitioners for their crisis communication plans (Wigley and Zhang, 2011).

PT Pertamina MOR IV through its Communication, Relations and CSR Unit also included social media into their



crisis communication plans. After a series of inefficacy of official campaigns from their official websites and social media, they improved the crisis management by using other parties' roles and media to educate and raise public awareness with the Invisible Hand program.

According to PT Pertamina MOR IV data, cities which often had scarcity issues in 3Kg LPG were Banyumas, Kebumen, Cilacap, Tegal, Pekalongan, Brebes and Yogyakarta Special Region. Officers of PT Pertamina MOR IV Communication and Relations assigned the first researcher during her internship to inquire popular local Instagram accounts in each city who actively posted updated local news or information and who had a considerable number of active followers. Table 1 illustrates lists of the popular local Instagram accounts from each city. The main criteria set by the Communication and Relations officer was that the Instagram accounts in each city must have more than 40.000 active followers. Since not all popular local Instagram accounts in each city had over 40.000 active followers, PT Pertamina MOR IV made an exception and decided to use them too. Other than having over 40.000 active followers, the popular local Instagram accounts must also provide paid promotion service. PT Pertamina MOR IV paid all the fee for the paid promotion service.

Table 1. List of Popular Local Instagram Accounts based on Each City in Central Java and Special Region of Yogyakarta

No.	City	Instagram account	Followers
1	Banyumas	Infobanyumas	8,5 K
2	Kebumen	Explore_kebumen	100 K
		Berita_kebumen	36,6 K

3	Cilacap	Insta_majenang	12,6 K
		Cilacap_kekinian	45.8 K
4	Tegal	exploretegal	89 K
		dolantegal	85 K
5	Pekalongan	pekalonganinfo	301 K
		Explorepekalongan	50,7 K
6	Brebes	Explore_brebes	41,3K
		brebesnesia	26.6 K
		Seputar_brebes	7,4 K
7	Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta	156 K
		Jogjaku	594 K
		jogjaistimewa	121 K
		Jogja today	53 K
		wonderfuljogja	582 K
		Jogja24jam	308 K
viewjogja	141 K		

Source: The Communication, Relations and CSR Unit of PT Pertamina MOR IV (2021)

After listing the 19 popular local Instagram accounts, The Communication, Relations and CSR Unit of PT Pertamina MOR IV created some content for Instagram posts. They created three designs (Figures 1, 2 & 3) of infographics and used three colors which were brown, white and blue in each background design. Those key designs were in 1:1 size, so the contents were completely fitted in Instagram feeds without any crop and edit. In all three key designs, there was a key message: the provision of 3 Kg LPG is only for the lower income households and small micro businesses. The purpose of the key message in the infographics was that people should become more aware of the distribution of 3Kg LPG. To remain invisible, PT Pertamina MOR IV did not



attach their corporate's name nor did they put their credit logo. The invisibility was intended for the public to see the infographic as an ordinary public service announcement, not a campaign from PT Pertamina.

Figure 1. Infographic design No. 1



Source: *Pekalonganinfo Instagram* (2021)

Figure 2. Infographic design No. 2



Source: *Pekalonganinfo Instagram* (2021)

Figure 3. Infographic design No. 3



Source: *Pekalonganinfo Instagram* (2021)

After the infographic designs were ready, officers of the Communication, Relations and CSR Unit assigned the first researcher, who was on an internship program during the campaign, to create a catchy caption in Indonesian Language for the three infographic designs to illustrate the Instagram posts. The caption said:

“Wah ternyata subsidi itu untuk keluarga miskin, rentang miskin dan usaha mikro lho! Mirisnya lagi, subsidi energi yang didanai APBN 2018 bengkak sampai 153Kg,5 Triliun! Kalau saja LPG subsidi tepat sasaran digunakannya, berapa banyak tuh anggaran subsidi yang bisa dialihkan untuk anggaran pendidikan dan infrastruktur lain? Yuk generasi muda kita #sadarsubsidi #LPGsubsidi tepatsasaran #yuksadarsubsidi”.

The caption contains information that the 3 Kg LPG is only for the lower income households and a fact that Indonesia's expenditure budget for energy subsidies in 2018 had reached 153Kg, 5 trillions rupiah. The last sentence of the caption calls for the

younger generation to support the awareness towards the subsidy issue of 3Kg LPG in order to minimize the scarcity in their area. The caption uses three hashtags: #sadersubsidi #LPGsubsiditepatsasaran #yuksadersubsidi. The hashtags' emphasis on subsidy is meant to encourage youngsters to grasp the real issue that 3Kg LPG scarcity is, in fact, resulted from subsidy abuse.

After having a deal with the terms and conditions for the paid promotion campaigns with the administrators of the Instagram accounts and deciding on the payment packages, the officers transferred the money to the bank account of the account administrators. In August 2019, the campaign infographics were posted on all popular local Instagram accounts (Table 1).

The popularity and engagement of each Instagram account did not directly result in the engagement of Invisible Hand campaign posts. The highest rate of engagement was observed from @pekalonganinfo. With 301,000 followers, the 3Kg LPG post received 1,559 likes and 24 comments. @jogjaku Instagram account which has the highest number of followers in this campaign (594,000 followers) was in the second level of engagement rate with 747 likes. The lowest rate of engagements was seen from @exploreprakalangan, with only 179 likes and zero comments. The following figures illustrate the samples of posts from the paid promotion campaigns on the selected Instagram accounts.

Figure 4. @pekalonganinfo post



1,559 likes
pekalonganinfo Wah ternyata subsidi itu untuk keluarga miskin, rentang miskin dan usaha mikro lho!
Mirisnya lagi, subsidi energi yang di danai APBN 2018 bengkak sampai 153,5Triliun!
Kalau saja LPG subsidi tepat sasaran digunakannya, berapa banyak tuh anggaran subsidi yang bisa dialihkan untuk anggaran pendidikan dan infrastruktur lain?

Source: Pekalonganinfo Instagram (2021)

Figure 5. @jogjaku post



747 likes
jogjaku Wah ternyata subsidi itu untuk keluarga miskin, rentang miskin dan usaha mikro lho!
Mirisnya lagi, subsidi energi yang di danai APBN 2018 bengkak sampai 153,5Triliun!
Kalau saja LPG subsidi tepat sasaran digunakannya, berapa banyak tuh anggaran subsidi yang bisa dialihkan untuk anggaran pendidikan dan infrastruktur lain?

Source: Pekalonganinfo Instagram (2021)

Figure 6. @explorepekalongan post



Source: *Pekalonganinfo Instagram (2021)*

The benchmark for this campaign was not only from how many likes that they achieved, but also from how many comments received. What the public said about the content of the campaign was also taken into account. There were various comments and responses from followers in the comment section (Figure 7). For instance, Instagram account @zadidbagu*** admitted that his family was from a middle income household and his father worked as a civil servant, yet his family still used 3Kg LPG that was subsidized by the government. He also gave suggestions that PT Pertamina should have been more intense in conducting inspection and investigation of 3Kg LPG provision in all distribution channels. In addition, there were comments from @tiaratie*** and @sarie***, informing that some big restaurants and factories were still using 3Kg LPG as their main production fuel. A criticism toward Indonesian citizens in general came from @dwi*** who stated that there were a lot of Indonesians who were happily enjoying the subsidy while in fact it was not intended for them. He

encouraged people to start changing their mentality regarding the subsidy and helping others in need instead.

Figure 7. Screenshots of Public Comments on Instagram



Source: *Pekalongan info Instagram (2021)*

By observing public reactions to the campaign posts, the Communication, Relations and CSR Unit could identify general public attitude towards the subsidized 3Kg LPG on social media. According to officers of the unit, public engagement in every post indicated that PT Pertamina MOR IV had succeeded in educating and creating public awareness on the provision of 3Kg LPG through the Invisible Hand program. Responding to suggestions by followers of the Instagram accounts, it would intensify the distribution supervision of the 3 Kg LPG in Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region in the future. The program through Instagram was also considered successful due to the fact that the public truly looked at the posts as public service announcements and that there were no comments from the public indicating that PT Pertamina MOR IV was holding the campaign.



The Invisible Hand through Media Relations

The second strategy of the Invisible Hand program is media relations. As a common practice in public relations, media relations functions to “increase public awareness and understanding of an organization’s activities by sending information to the media and by inviting the media to see operations firsthand” (Tilley, 2005). Having good relations with some media is a good practice for any public relations professionals to build strong and sustainable relationships with key media figures, to understand what kinds of stories are and when they will be covered in their media. Managing mutual relations with media has been proven much more effective than simply ‘pitching stories’ or ‘issuing press releases’, which may or may not be picked up by the media (Burgeon, 2019).

The Communication, Relations, and CSR Unit also believed that the media play significant roles in changing public attitudes. Moreover, the media have power to decide which events or information is worthy for publication (McCombs, 2000). The public who actively consume media either printed or online versions to enhance their information horizon will believe what media say about certain issues. Accordingly, having positive coverage on media and getting information delivered correctly may help an organization gain trust from the public.

After campaigning through Instagram, PT Pertamina MOR IV held a media relations event by inviting journalists around Central Java Province and Yogyakarta Special Region into FGD about the distribution mechanism of 3Kg LPG. The FGD was entitled “Mekanisme Distribusi LPG 3 Kg Tepat Sasaran”. This event was held on Thursday, August 29, 2019 at Grand Artos Hotel and

Convention Center, located in Magelang City.

To ensure its invisibility, PT Pertamina MOR IV collaborated with Economic Journalists Forum (Forum Wartawan Ekonomi) in Semarang to create FGD and to invite journalists from reputable printed and online media from Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region. PT Pertamina MOR IV and the forum agreed that the one in charge of organizing the focus group discussion was the Economic Journalists Forum. PT Pertamina MOR IV would act as a sole sponsor as well as main speakers in this event.

The Economic Journalists Forum invited 44 journalists from 21 media for the FGD. They were from Zonapasar.com, Detik.com, Sorot.co, Metrojateng.com, Magelang Express, Purworejo Express, Bisnis Indonesia, Berita Magelang, Suara Merdeka, Kedaulatan Rakyat, Harian Jogja, Koran Wawasan, Jawa Pos Radar Jogja, Jawa Pos Radar Semarang, Metro TV, TA TV, Kompas TV, Radio Tidar Magelang, UP Radio Semarang, Radio Unimma, and Radio Idola. The forum also invited four main speakers, such as Andar Titi Lestari (the Unit Manager of Communication and Relations of PT Pertamina MOR IV) (Figure 8), M. Arif Sambodo (the Head of Department of Trade and Industry of Central Java Province), Sutarto Murti Utomo (the Chief of Hiswana Migas Kedu), and Nia Kurniaty (an Economic Observer from Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang).

Figure 8. Andar Titi Lestari, the Unit Manager of Communication and Relations of PT Pertamina MOR IV





Source: PT.Pertamina MOR IV documentation (2021)

The FGD event was successfully executed. Both the journalists and the main speakers were enthusiastic as they were exciting in delivering and responding to questions regarding the topics in the discussion. The speakers were also eager to respond to criticism from the journalists. Moreover, participants in the FGD were more excited after some of them received shopping vouchers and Bright Gas 5.5Kg vouchers from PT Pertamina MOR IV.

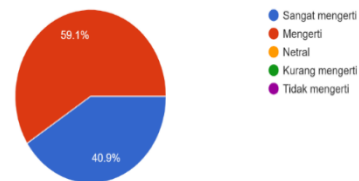
Even though the overall activity in the FGD was well organized, PT Pertamina MOR IV was obliged to evaluate the outcomes from this media relations strategy. Therefore, all of the participants were required to fill a questionnaire in the form of Google Form at the end of the event. The questionnaire included brief personal data, evaluation of the event and several questions to check whether participants understand the distribution and subsidy mechanism of the 3Kg LPG. It consisted of scale questions and open-answer questions. The questions for distribution and subsidy mechanism were in scale format with five items (understand very well (*sangat mengerti*), understand (*mengerti*), neutral (*netral*), do not completely understand (*kurang mengerti*), and do not understand (*tidak mengerti*)).

The questionnaire results showed that 59.1% of participants understood the distribution mechanism of the subsidized 3Kg LPG, and 40.9% of them stated that they understood the procedure of the 3Kg LPG provision very well (Figure 9).

Figure 9: The results of the questionnaire about the participants' understanding towards the event

Setelah saya mengikuti FGD, saya mengerti alur distribusi LPG subsidi tepat sasaran

44 responses



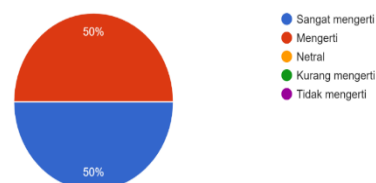
Source: processed by researchers (2021)

In addition, the participants understood the main distribution target of the 3Kg LPG (Figure 10). 50% of the participants understood about the distribution target of 3Kg LPG, and 50% stated that they understood the distribution target of 3Kg-kilogram LPG very well.

Figure 10. The results of the questionnaire about the understanding of the 3Kg LPG distribution target

Setelah saya mengikuti FGD, saya mengerti sasaran LPG bersubsidi 3 Kg

44 responses



Source: processed by researchers (2021)

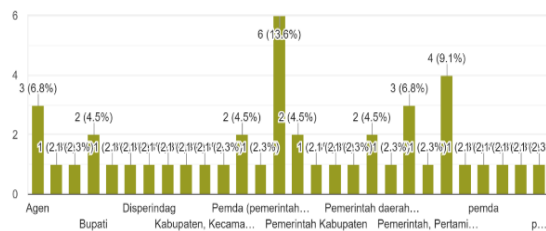
For an issue related to the party in charge of the 3Kg distribution supervision, the responses to the question varied since it

was an open-answer question (Figure 11). However, most of the responses (approximately 80%) refer to the local government. The respondents answer *bupati*, *pemda*, *pemerintah daerah*, *pemerintah kabupaten* dan *kabupaten* (all of which were terms designated to the local government who was in charge of the supervision of 3Kg LPG distribution in every region). Few participants mentioned that the parties responsible for the 3Kg distribution were the agent (6.8%), Pertamina (9.1%), and Disperindag (Department of Industry and Trade) (2.11%).

Figure 11: The answers to the question related to the distribution supervision authority

Setelah saya mengikuti acara FGD ini, pihak yang berwenang mengendalikan kuota LPG 3 Kg di setiap daerah adalah:

44 responses



Source: processed by researchers (2021)

In the other than the questionnaire results, the indication for the successful outcome of this strategy was the publication of news reports by the journalists. Most of the mass media who participated in the event wrote news related to the event as well as the results of the focus group discussion. Some media published the news right after the event (August 29, 2019) and others published it on the following day (August 30, 2019). The followings (Figures 11-17) are six examples of news captures from suaramerdeka.com, berita_magelang.id, ekbis.harian.jogja.com, semarang.bisnis.com, detik.com, and

kr.jogja.com regarding the focus group discussion and the issues of 3Kg LPG in Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region Province.

Figure 12 news on suaramerdeka.com



Source: Researcher documentation (2021)

Figure 13. news on beritamagelang.id



Source: Researcher documentation
(2021)

Figure 14. news on harianjogja.com



Source: Researcher documentation
(2021)

Figure 15. news on bisnis.com



Source: Researcher documentation
(2021)

Figure 16. news on detiknews.com



Source: Researcher documentation
(2021)

As seen in the previous figures, the journalists invited to the FGD had effectively delivered the intended campaign by PT Pertamina MOR IV through their news. Those media had also shed some light on the real issues behind the 3Kg LPG scarcity. They also encouraged the public to understand that the 3Kg LPG was heavily subsidized by the central government and that only the low income households and micro businesses might deserve the subsidy.

CONCLUSION

As some energy subsidies burden the national expenditure, PT Pertamina, the only state-owned enterprise mandated in the subsidized 3Kg LPG provision, is responsible in educating and raising public awareness to the importance of the subsidy for lower income households and businesses. PT Pertamina MOR IV which is in charge of Pertamina operation in Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region created campaign called “The Invisible Hand” program because it utilized other parties’ media to spread the actual information on the distribution mechanism of 3 Kg LPG in Indonesia.

The campaigns did not mention Pertamina nor did they use the Pertamina logo in any campaign materials. The particular purpose of this strategy was that PT Pertamina MOR IV would like to educate the public about the real issues behind the subsidy and scarcity of the 3 Kg LPG in several areas of Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region. The assistance of other parties’ media was intended to distance Pertamina away from public visibility and perception. This study indicated that the Invisible Hand program was implemented through two strategies: social media campaigns and media relations. Social media campaigns were performed through paid promotion of popular local Instagram

accounts in Central Java and Yogyakarta Special Region while media relations were executed through focus group discussion (FGD) with local journalists. Positive awareness and responses from the public were proven by positive Instagram engagements. For media relations, a common understanding between PT Pertamina (Persero) MOR IV and the journalists was achieved, and the messages to educate the public were well-delivered by the media. The outcomes of the Invisible Hand program are also in line with cyber public relations goals stated by Onggo (2004) which include relations, reputation, and relevance. PT Pertamina MOR IV was able to interact with the public via third parties’ media, to maintain corporate image, and to be relevant with issues faced by the public targeted by the organization.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal or other issues with other people or organizations related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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