

#nodam in #maewong: Framing Analysis on the Roles of Social Media and Strategic Public Relations in Environmental Movement in Thailand

Teerada Chongkolrattanaporn

Abstract

Public relations play crucial roles in advocating environmental issues in Thailand where several natural resources are under risk due to precarious plan of authority. Together with the sacrifice spirit of the campaigners, agitation strategies and public relations tactics by a local major environmental advocacy group in Thailand-SeubNakhasathien Foundation-enable the process of change to become more feasible by engaging virtual and physical public support. Yet, only a few studies have examined public relations and its function in environmental movement (Jurin, Roush, and Danter, 2010; Hansen and Cox, 2015). Thus, this research is an attempt to understand how social media has become an important tactical tool to achieve the goals of environmental campaigners by applying framing analysis to investigate PR key messages distributed on social media. In 2013, a year before the *coup d'etat*, Mr. Sasin Chalermklarp started a 388 kilometers walking campaign from the location where Mae Wong dam was planned for construction to Bangkok, Thailand's capital city. He called for support from more than 20,000 people to join him in central of Bangkok by spreading the word through the social media site of SeubNakhasathien Foundation, particularly its Facebook Fanpage (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/มูลนิธิสืบนาคะเสถียร/58487231166017>) and Twitter (seubfd and sasin_seub). This article analyzes news relevant to the issues to identify the frames presented and compare them to the campaign frames to evaluate the campaigns' effectiveness. The analysis shows that that the frames evident in big data analysis of social media campaigners, news, and publics are not consistent. Yet, the campaign can be considered a successful case, as the government decided to prolong and revise the dam project.

Keywords: Environmental Campaign, Strategic Public Relations, Thai Environmentalists

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1. Introduction

Public relations is often thought of as putting ‘spin’ on bad situations to make them acceptable to public. Nevertheless, some environmental communication scholars believe that public relations represent powerful communication approaches that can be fruitfully, ethically and wisely used to deliver messages to audiences about environmental issues. If there is any sector in which engaging audiences is important, it is in the not-for-profit. A good public relations strategy will draw supporters to the vital activity that supports an organization’s cause. Still, public relations is always associated with negative concepts such as spinning, propaganda and green washing (Jurin, Roush and Danterm 2010). However, as this paper will later demonstrate, public relations tactic—particularly one utilizing social media—can provide an important means to foster positive environmental campaign that promotes change.

In Thailand, the attempts to create environmental campaigns vary among government units, private sector and non-for-profit organizations. One of the major activist groups for environmental issues is Seub Nakhasathien Foundation; it has constantly provided leadership and directions in the areas of wildlife, forest and natural resource protection. In 2013 (¹a year

before the *coup d’etat*), Mr. Sasin Chalermklarp, the secretary of this foundation, started a 388 kilometers walking campaign from the location where Mae Wong dam was planned for construction to Bangkok, the Thai capital, to contest the dam construction in Mae Wong district of NakhonSawan, a province in the northern part of Thailand. The walk started from September 11 22, 2013 from Mae Wong district to Bangkok.

This article examines public relations strategies and tactics used in environmental movement in Thailand. It shows that using social media as a new way to gain support online and offline is an efficient public relations tactic for environmental protection. Specifically, using framing analysis, this paper investigates the effectiveness of a social media campaign conducted by environmental activists, using Seub Nakhasathien Foundation’s action to oppose the Thai’s government dam development project as a case study. It provides the first framing analysis of social media discourse in Thai studies of public relations. Toward that end, messages communicated in social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook are analyzed to determine consistency among the campaigners, journalists, and other users. Doing deepens public relations scholars’ insights about how the

¹On 22 May 2014, the Royal Thai Armed Forces, led by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Commander of the Royal Thai Army (RTA), launched a *coup d’etat*, the 12th since the country’s first coup in 1932. The military established a junta called the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) to govern the nation. After dissolving the government and the Senate, the NCPO vested executive and legislative powers in its leader and ordered the judicial branch to operate under its directives. In addition, it partially repealed the 2007 constitution, saved the second chapter which concerns the king, declared martial law and curfew nationwide, banned political gatherings, arrested and detained politicians and anti-coup activists, imposed Internet censorship and took control of the media. The NCPO issued an interim constitution granting itself amnesty and sweeping power. The NCPO also established a military dominated national legislature which later unanimously elected General Prayut as the new prime minister of the country up to today (2018).

affordances and impacts of process of framing in public relations campaign on environmental issues in social media. Moreover, through examining a successful case of environmental campaign, this article identifies key framing practices that lead to effective communication that can propel positive environmental change. As a whole, this study provides insights that can be used to strategize public relation discourse through social media for scholars and practitioners, providing tactical possibilities for informed praxis.

2. Public Relations and Environmental Movement

Public relations, when used proactively, can be powerful, two-way communications tool for an organization to establish trust and mutual benefits with its publics. As argued by the Public Relations Society of America, “Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other” (Public Relations Society of America, 2009). When properly conducted, public relations can benefit both the organization and society through a campaign.

According to the *Encyclopaedia of Public Relations*, a campaign is the strategic design of a series of messages sent to one or more targeted populations for a discrete period of time in response to a positive or negative situation affecting the organization (Heath, 2005). Similarly, Snyder (2003) defines a communication campaign as “an organized communication activity, directed at a particular audience, for a particular period of time, to achieve a particular goal.” Specifically, the term campaign can be used to mean an *environmental advocacy campaign*, and Cox (2007) has defined it as a

strategic course of action involving communication undertaken for a specific purpose.

From the communication perspective, Cantrill (1991) has described environmental advocacy as a kind of “symbolic discourse (i.e., legal, educational, expository, artistic, public and/or interpersonal communication) aimed at supporting conversation and the preservation of finite resources” (p. 68). Cox (2007) has broadened the term to include the support for both natural and human environments and the well being of the lives these environments sustain (p. 244).

Furthermore, Cox (2007) distinguished environmental advocacy campaign based on two particular differences. First, while most issue campaigns are institutionally sponsored to reduce risk or influence individual attitudes or behaviours, environmental advocacy campaigns are usually waged by *non-institutional sources* such as concerned individuals, environmental organizations, or small community action groups. Moreover, most public relations and public health campaigns seek to change *individuals’ attitudes and/or behaviour*. Most environmental advocacy campaigns, on the other hand, seek to change either certain *external conditions or the policy or practice of a governmental or corporate body* (p. 251). Yet this may not always be the case in Thailand, where people do not have as strong of a consciousness toward environmental concerns as they do toward economic issues (Kaewthep and Rojanasupoj, 2013). Where I can gain money is more important than what is the cause of pollution. Moreover, Cox (2007) asserts that a campaign typically relies on multiple forms of advocacy; in designing an advocacy campaign, there are three fundamental questions of objectives, audiences, and strategies (Cox, 2007, p. 254).

Thus, to communicate environmental matter to Thai people, setting clear and tangible objectives is necessary, as well as deeply understanding the nature of Thai audience. They will lead to the right strategies to help Thais see the problem and, hence, significance of the campaign. Yet, some environmental advocacy, namely global warming campaigns, fails to achieve the set goals, due to the lack of budget and ambiguity of the target message (Chongkolrattanaporn, 2012).

As for environmental campaign, the hierarchical “top-down” models of asking or telling members of the public what is good or bad for them and expecting them to comply are too often ineffective. There is a need for citizen engagement, so they can interact and share information. Toward that end, citizens should

be involved in several procedures, including strategizing, making decisions, and implementing programs (O’Keefe and Shepard, 2002). Even if a campaign is watchfully designed and distributed, it does not necessarily mean that the outcome will be a success. Thus, there is a need to find a campaign that can be both efficient and effective.

Several environmental organizations in Thailand have established communication units, also known as public relations department, to achieve their organization objectives through communication process. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Thailand, for example, has their own public relations unit, and they also hired a public relations agency to pitch their work on wildlife campaign. One of their best-known campaign, which received the 2013 Cannes Lions Bronze



Figure 1: Photo release for ‘Shame on Us’ Campaign by Ogilvy Public Relations Thailand

Gold Award, is ‘Shame on Us.’ Planned and managed by Ogilvy Public Relations (Thailand), the unit’s responsibilities include government, public, and international relations. Its award-winning campaign targeted the government and government level institutions, asking them to reinforce the law against ivory sale, especially from Thailand to other countries. Apart from winning a regional public relations award, the campaign’s major achievement is the signing of an agreement by Thai government and 177 attending global representatives to actualize the historic announcement to “end all ivory trade in Thailand.”

NGOs already outsmart and outthink corporations and governments in many critical issues, as they are the quintessential “experts with attitude” (Blood, 2005, p. 188). There are two major types of NGOs. While ‘Super brands’ NGOs such as Greenpeace and WWF are categorized as technician groups with outstanding specialist experts and technical resources, micro-activists are organized in cells and consist of individuals connected intellectually and ideologically, rather than physically with online platform (Blood, 2005). The SuebNakasatien Foundation falls in the middle of these two spectrums. The organization is well known in Thailand for protecting forests and wildlife but is run by a few individuals without any backers.

3. Environmental Campaigns and Public Relations Strategies

The public relations process starts from research aimed at understanding the situation, as well as to support the next step, planning. This includes setting the communication objectives, designing strategies, as well as choosing tactics

to achieve the goals. Lastly, the process is completed with evaluation, a step meant to indicate how efficient and effective a campaign is during and after the operation of public relations works (Gregory, 2006). Similarly, environmental campaigns follow this process of communication. Accordingly, this section analyzes a campaign based on the following important elements. First, communicators will be analyzed and categorized into campaigners and their target audience. Next, the planning of environmental campaigns is examined. Lastly, the evaluation of green campaigns is discussed by analyzing frames in the big data approach to investigate the consistency among frames of campaigners, news and publics.

3.1 Environmental Public Relations Practitioners

The campaign team is a crucial component of campaign making. Seldom is a campaign created, much less implemented, by a single individual. Instead, there are usually two or more professionals who comprise a public relations campaign team, and the result of their collective work almost always translates into a superior effort (Gregory, 2004). Directing most public relations efforts is a campaign manager or project leader, who is in charge of stakeholders and is responsible for things that transpires during the campaign. In a larger team, specialization is typical. There may be a campaign leader with several program or function coordinators, who are responsible for such areas as news materials, media relations, special event planning, and employee relations. On the other hand, in smaller companies or agencies, one or more individuals will normally handle all of these responsibilities. Therefore, in order to understand the rationale

behind a campaign, there is a need to know the campaign team and their goals and objectives.

Moreover, those who take part in developing a campaign can be stakeholders, sometimes identified as “the community” (Spicer, 2007). This refers to those who receive direct effect from the certain issue targeted by the campaign. In Freeman’s (2010) *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, a stakeholder is defined as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm’s objectives” (p. 25). However, the word ‘affect’ can be problematic. As Donaldson and Preston (1995) write, “[i]t is essential to draw a clear distinction between influencers and stakeholders: ... some recognizable stakeholders have no influence, and some influencers have no stakes” (p. 86). Adding the degree of influence, Coombs (1998) categorized stakeholders into two groups: primary: “those who can harm or benefit the organization” and secondary: “those who can affect or be affected by the actions of an organization” but not to the same critical degree as the primary (p. 292).

Former *New York Times* writer Philip Shabecoff (2000) argues that the chief role of environmental groups is to act as “intermediaries between science and the public, the media, and lawmakers” (p. 152). They can be considered as liaisons in the environmental networks. According to *Campaign Target Publics or Target Audience Members*, public demand is an active demonstration of support for the campaign’s objective by key constituency groups, such as families with small children, voters in a key

swing district, persons with respiratory problems, commuters, or members of a sports club (Cox, 2007). In environmental campaign, however, there may be several environmental groups or communities working toward a sole environmental, and within this process, other voices and constituencies may be competing for the same support (p. 255). The campaign for using fabric bags, for instance, has been widely employed by governmental agencies, business entrepreneurs and NGOs, while all targeting the same public in the beginning period of Earth Hour in 2007, particularly in Thailand’s capital, Bangkok.

There are three relevant categories of self-identified opinion leaders in communicating campaigns to boost citizen political participation, enhance cognitive engagement, or to spark greater citizen engagement. The first one is issue-specific opinion leaders or those who have intense involvement with a specific issue or topic, characterized by greater levels of media attention and issue-specific knowledge (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, 1948). The second category is influence of personality strength: those distinguished by their level of personality strength, a construct “reflecting confidence in leadership roles, their aptitude at shaping others’ opinions, and their self-perceived impact on social and political outcomes” (Weimann, Tusti, van Vuuren and Joubert, 2007, p. 180). In other words, the opinion leaders in this category have a strong personality and charisma attracting followers. The last category is ‘Influentials’. These individuals would be “most articulate in their feeling about big corporations” and “most concerned to attack

or defend them” (Keller and Berry, 2003, p. 18). These influencers are substantially more interested in social matters than the rest of the public. Even though they place responsibility for solutions on relevant stakeholders such as government, business and communities, they would be willing to take a real action to support certain social issues. Mr. Sasin is a very good example of an opinion leader in environmental communication in Thai media. He has regularly been referred to by the media on matter concerning natural resources, such as flood crisis in 2010 and dam construction in 2013.

Campaigners can also work as agitators or individuals who are outside the decision-making establishment who desire significant social change and meet resistance from the establishment. Competent agitators generally move through the strategies from least to more and more disruptive (Bowers and Ochs, 1971). The use of Mr. Sasin as a center of media attention is an example; it is a good strategy to agitate the press and the government at the same time. His walk is a disrupting means to draw attention on the low quality of the Environmental and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) report, which supports the construction of a dam in Mae Wong, the most genuine forestry area in the northern part of Thailand.

Mr. Sasin’s solid agitating standpoint on the damn construction concern provides a great advantage for seeking alliance. Not only does it allow the Sueb Nakhasathien foundation to call for support from Thai citizens through the walk campaign, it can also draw attention from top

celebrities in Thailand, who have up to 1 million followers, to use the hashtag #nodam to change their profile photo to include this label. Normally, these famous celebrities would charge their posts for the marketers. However, during this walk event, they voluntarily posted their comments and photos to support the campaign without any remuneration. Moreover, some of them actually joined the walk. An editor of well-know magazine *A Day* walked and interviewed with Mr. Sasin to write a special article for him. Last but not least, the arguments among politicians and environmental advocates also sparked conversation online and on news coverage. Having these opinion leaders as the campaign’s ally provides a good source of message distribution, as well as points of interest for public in general. Thus, good campaigners need to know how to gain alliance especially from opinion leaders in society and in online platform. The walk campaign started from its own media and spread to alliance media. The growth eventually put pressure on the government. It motivated a pledge by the army government to reconsider the construction of the dam and to reinvestigate the report of environmental and health impact.

3.2 Environmental Campaign Objectives

The main goal of many environmental organizations is to lobby the government through actions, such as submitting an application for funding, influencing policy decision making or creating or amending legislation (Hamilton, 2016). There are some disagreements about the meaning of the terms “goal” and “objective” (Matera and Artigue, 2000). According to some perspectives,

it is suggested that goals are eminent, but objectives are secondary; they play an assistance role. A goal should also produce a measurable result within a given period of time. Thus, there are five useful questions to ask about goals:

1. Do they clearly describe the end expected result?
2. Are they understandable to everyone in the organization?
3. Do they list a firm completion date?
4. Are they realistic, attainable, and measurable?
5. Are they consistent with the management's objectives?

According to Cutlip, Center, and Broom (1994), "objectives spell out the key results that must be achieved with each public to reach the program goal. (p. 54)" In practice, they create focus, provide guidance and motivation, and specify outcome criteria. Objectives, if they are clear and in writing, can keep the team and their program on track. The objectives are most useful if following a suggested pattern. For example, sentences should begin with "to" followed by a verb to describe the direction of the intended outcome. A specific outcome should be noted, as well as the magnitude of change or level to be maintained in measurable terms. Lastly, a target date should be included for when the outcome can be achieved.

Management by objectives (MBO), a mainstay in most organizations, can provide public relations professionals with a powerful source of feedback. Introduced by Peter Drucker (2012), MBO can tie public relations results to the

management's predetermined objectives. Despite the difference in program implementation, most programs share these notes:

- specification of the organization's goals with objective measures of the organization's performance;
- conferences between a superior and a subordinate to agree on achievable goals;
- agreement between the superior and the subordinate on objectives consistent with the organizations' goals;
- periodic reviews by the superior and subordinate to assess progress toward achieving the goals.

According to Seitel (2001), "the key is to tie public relations goals to the goals of the organization and then to manage progress toward achieving those goals. The goals themselves should be clearly defined and specific, practical and attainable, and measurable" (p. 95) Therefore, the team and goals plus the objectives of a global warming campaign must be precise and concise enough to effectively create the program.

In the context of the environmental advocacy campaign, Cox (2007) has defined strategy as a specific plan to bring about a desired outcome; it is the identification of specific steps or means to an end (p. 258). Strategic implementation includes educational and persuasive messages, spokespeople, and events to mobilize a group's base of support, as well as opinion leaders and media, to influence the primary audience to act on the group's objective. Moreover, journalist William Greider (2003) examined the

shift in strategy used in campaigning. It turned out that traditional “buy green” campaigns that rely on individual consumer purchases have had an exceedingly modest effect on corporate practices.

Furthermore, Richardson and Hinton (2015) have summarized that activist groups, often called special-interest groups or advocacy groups, usually try to influence popular opinion, promote changes in public policy, exert pressure on corporations, remedy social problems and affect personal behaviors. These moves also go in line with how the Sueb Nakasathien campaign’s public relations has set its objectives:

1. To express determination in forest conservation and to reject the EHIA (Environmental and Health Impact Assessment) report, which is considered to be biased to support the construction of the dam;
2. To protest against the lack of awareness toward the importance of ecosystem, due to the rush of completing a report;
3. To promote awareness among citizens on the issue of Thailand’s standard for environmental impact assessment.

Sueb Nakasathien Foundation did not only attempt to communicate to the government and relevant authorities, they also tried to gain support from the public. The walk participants also emphasized that they would like to encourage lay people to know more about this issue so that they can determine for themselves whether they should support the dam construction or not.

3.3 Environmental Campaign Programming

An important aspect of public relations campaign is the use of media options. The selection of media used by campaign designers is typically based on political or economic reasons. This section discusses two primary channels that are common in campaign: televised and print media. Television has the capacity to reach millions of viewers, so public service announcements usually turn out to be a good choice. An in-country and national newspaper is another good outlet to reach science and environmental decision-makers, as it is a preferred method for those campaigns seeking to influence a small subset of the population. For example, *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* is particularly good for reaching those who are scientifically literate and actively seeking science information (Miller, 2004). The publication mostly targets middle class readers who have access and interest to the scientific information. On the other hand, it may not be the most efficient medium for reaching working class readers. Thus, studies that use national newspapers as sample may not be able to represent people in general.

In both televised and print media, a common method used to convince the target population to support a campaign is to create an emerging norm. This can help motivate behaviour change by tapping into our desire to conform by convincingly representing certain action as something that “everyone” does, or at least, the people the audience respect. Typically, these people are known as opinion leaders, such as celebrities (Cialdini, 2001). This option is based on psychological

theory of Ajzen (1991), who posited that behavioural intentions are due in part to subjective norms (e.g. beliefs about what significant others close to the subject think s/he should do). For example, research participants recycled more frequently and in greater amounts when they were given feedback through either injunctive social norms (what others think should be done) or descriptive social norms (what other people are doing) (Bator and Cialdini, 2000). Communications can help increase adoption via different channels such as daily life conversation, mass media coverage, and communication from trusted sources. An emerging norm can be applied when the campaign designers know exactly who are the target population's opinion leaders. This strategy uses pressure from the people around the target audience to act as motivation to comply with the campaign's objective.

In order to put the framing analysis into practice, then, the research needs to study the media and strategies of environmental campaigns to understand the pragmatics of environmentalism, as exemplified in a done by Griffin and Dunwoody (2000). They examined the strategy behind media selection done through a survey conducted in Milwaukee to explore the predictors of channel use about environmental risk. The city tried to communicate with the residents about the problem of lead contaminants in drinking water by placing a brochure in their next water bill. The brochure, a mediated channel, identified the problem and offered a number of risk-reducing behaviours. When the researchers sought linkages between channel use and behaviour change, they

found, predictably, that exposure to the brochure had virtually no effect. Most of the residents had no memory of even receiving the publication. In fact, what did predict adopting safer behaviours was a visit to the home by a public health official. In sum, it is obvious that an interpersonal channel is an effective alternative for communicating risk. This study raises an important implication about the limitation of channel usage: While mediated channels such as television and newspapers may reach millions and provide a cost-effective source of information about global climate change, they may not persuade individuals that such a change will have an impact on them personally or that they can do something personally about the problem. To have an influence on someone's personal beliefs and behaviours may require an array of information channels. More specifically, the gold standard for behaviour change remains interpersonal communication. Thus, if the campaign objective is to change someone's behaviour in ways that are novel and at least initially inconvenient, the best advice is "talk to him" (Dunwoody, 2007).

3.4 Channels for Environmental Communication

Having examined the limitations and affordances of various media channels, the remaining sections analyse the use of social media as an important campaign channel in Thai environmental campaign by Sueb Nakasatien Foundation. The use of media from its campaign mainly relied on the following channels: Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Since the Foundation does not have a large budget for media planning,

it has to create stories that can draw attention from the media and the following basic tactic of public relations: attempting to have a third person to speak for it; this third person is mainly journalists (Seitel, 2001). In its campaign, celebrities also play important roles as endorsers for the issue. Moreover, partner media such as a documentary TV shows and environmental magazines also reinforce the campaign's message, bringing it to mass communication level. Even though national television stations banned the Foundation's documentary about the dam from broadcast, they decided to have the show available online via YouTube. Consequently, this helped increased more viewers than regular televised on-air channel and time, due to wide sharing online-a key affordance encouraged and enabled through social media. Thus, one good PR strategy for environmental issue is to use social media to gain alliance from those well-known in society. And this can be done only through the solid standpoint on the issue, rather than to pay money for support.

Campaign Messages. With the campaign team in place and the goal clearly stated, it is possible to develop campaign programs, including message strategies intended for the various audience segments. As seen in studies of many environmental groups, Cox (2007) posited that a strategic message is usually made up of a phrase or sentence that concisely expresses a campaign's objective and the values at stake in the decision of primary audiences. Although there is considerable information and arguments elaborated in a given campaign, the key message itself is

usually short, compelling, and memorable, and it accompanies all of a campaign's communication materials (p. 263).

Sueb Nakasatien Foundation's campaign used an interesting storytelling strategy. For instance, stories of lifetime work of Mr. Sasin provides for a good tactic. He has knowledge and passion. He is portrayed as a fighter to help people connect with him more easily and to lead them to support him virtually and physically. In the campaign, he tried to personalize his message through social media accounts. The message aims to help people see him as an ordinary man-to whom they can relate. Most of his messages were retweeted, while those of foundation was not as popular. His discourse moves an environmental issue, which is not always close to the public's heart, to make it easier for people to follow and care. While Mr. Sasin's account uses personal touch on the message, Sueb Nakasatien Foundation's account focuses on the issue itself. As Dunwoody (2007) indicates, personal connection-and in this case, touch-is important: People tend to support a person rather than an organization.

Yet, it is almost impossible to control how the media will characterize a topic, no matter what is said about that particular subject in a neatly prepared media kit. However, through preparing collateral prevention materials as a precautionary measure, a campaign manager is in a position to control the message content, if s/he is prepared to do so. What is important to remember is to know what to say, how to say it, and when to say it. Context can also play an

important role in the message process. Moreover, the other factor that greatly affects the effectiveness of one's campaign messages is continuity between message and medium. As Keller (2016) states, "the different messages in a communication campaign should be recognized as part of the same effort, whether the format is print, radio, television, brochures, or direct mail. A 'building' effect, which improves memory and learning, is accomplished through message continuity devices. (p. 288)" The idea of these message continuity devices has led to an integrated communication campaign that has recently become more popular. This is the case of Mr. Sasin who focuses on one solid message of No Dam. This particular label is widely distributed in different media with different formats so that it can be absorbed by diverse groups of audience.

Information maybe legitimated by a news portal, but the value of the portal will be determined by peers, and the value of the 'story' is measured by 'likes' and 'shares' (Phillips and Young, 2009). Throughout Mr. Sasin's journey during his walk, he was able to hear voices of people from wide range of communities with different standpoints on the dam construction matter. It does not matter which side is discussed. As long as there are words about this campaign, the message will be at least liked or shared by the followers of either parties. This helps create a circulation of message among the media. Interestingly, the simple message such as 'no dam' can stimulate the arguments online and offline via TV and radio programs.

Campaign Communication Tools. Online platforms provide a space for public relations practitioners to also work as a journalist. News release and news story are broadly similar. The use of social media as a news outlet is advantageous, considering that the narrative of the last thirty years has been one of media fragmentation and, most notably for printed newspapers, one of decline (Young, 2016).

The use of social media is a fantastic and low-cost option that makes it incredibly easy to spread a message to a very large number of people who in turn may 'share' or 'retweet' messages so that the text is distributed to an even wider group of individuals across the world.

For example, a Facebook fanpage was set up under the name "Sasin Chalermklarp" as a major communication tool of the anti-dam campaign (<https://www.facebook.com/Sasin.Chalermklarp/>) The page includes information such as organizational objectives, campaign goals, and facts and details of the walk, allowing others to see current updates about the situation. Most importantly, Mr. Sasin would create a message or a post by himself as a journal for his journey. His messages are typically delivered with sincerity. The Facebook page also works as a forum for those interested in sharing their insights and offer moral supports for the walkers, hereby enabling currency, a sense of community and virtual interpersonal interaction and connection.

To promote media coverage, the anti-dam campaign also established media relations consists by maintaining working contacts with news media professionals, including those in local

and national newspapers, television, radio, bloggers and other mass media outlets. A documentary program called *KonKonKon* (People Discovering People) aired a special episode on the dam issue entitled “Sasin Chalermklarp 388 KM. from Forest to City.” To widely publicize the documentary and generate public interest, the footage from this program was reposted and retweeted online both by the news accounts, as well as personal accounts of citizens. This enabled Mr. Sasin to become an important figure in current event.

Becoming one of “talks of the town,” Mr. Sasin’s anti-dam walk campaign was able to recruit more supporters for his walk, including students and people with special abilities. He reached his destination, the Bangkok Administrative Cultural Center, on September 22, 2013. As a result of the publicity of his campaign, the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment assigned his secretary to receive Mr. Sasin’s petition against the dam in which he requested a new review the Environmental and Health Impact Assessment of Mae Wong Dam in Nakonsawan Province. The Minister also stated that the Ministry would carefully examine the EHIA report and would not rush the construction process.

4. Environmental Campaign Effectiveness: Framing Analysis

This section details key points about framing analysis for campaign evaluation. Then it proceeds to examine the frames used in the anti-dam campaign drawn from social media. The framing analysis is conducted to investigate the consistency

of frames emerged among campaigners, news media, and publics to indicate the effectiveness of the campaign. If measurable objectives were set at the beginning of the planning process, then there is a mean for measuring the effectiveness of the campaign and framing approach (Chongkolrattanaporn, 2012). Evaluation is the act of measuring consequences of a campaign in terms of whether it is considered a success or failure. More complex definitions include assessing the overall effectiveness of the campaign. To realistically evaluate the campaign, the measures of effectiveness must be objective, systematic and empirical (Parkinson and Ekachai, 2006).

Public relations campaigns with the greatest integrity always begin and end with research. Early research helps to determine the current situation, prevalent attitudes, and difficulties that the program is up against. Later research examines the program’s success, along with what else still needs to be done. Researching both points in the process is critical. Therefore, Seitel (2001) states that research should be applied in public relations work both at the initial stage, prior to planning a campaign, and at the final stage to evaluate a program’s effectiveness.

Campaign evaluation can take place at any stage of the process. In the beginning, campaigners have to evaluate the situation as a part of the research phase in the ROPE process proposed by Hendrix and Hayes (2010): research, objectives, programming and evaluation. In the final stage, evaluation measures the consequences of the campaign to identify its success or failure; it should be carried out as an ongoing process to

yield a long-term evaluation. More complex definitions include assessing the overall effectiveness of the campaign, defined as front end and back end evaluation (Coffman, 2003). Other academics also argue that even though the campaign is vigilantly designed and distributed, it does not necessarily bring about a successful outcome. Thus, there is a need to find a campaign that can be efficient and effective (O'Keefe and Shepard, 2002). Both efficiency and effectiveness have to be measured in accordance with the initiated objectives. Some campaigns may achieve effectiveness but not efficiency, or vice versa. Evaluation methods can be the tools to identify and cover any areas, which the campaigners, sponsors or even the policy makers need to see feedback. Moreover, in different cultural contexts, the indicators of success should also include appropriateness, which can be identified by cultural values embedded in society.

Toward that end, framing is essential when there is a need to communicate to a broad audience, particularly where communicators and recipients are from different communities. It can also be applied as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of a campaign (Chongkolrattanaporn, 2012). Based on two cases of how organizations communicate risk to low-income and minority communities, framing the problem is the first priority among five tactics (Agyeman and Evans, 2004). Mostly, citizens in poor, rural areas and disinvested inner urban cores are likely to be sceptical of programs that originate outside their community. It is suggested by Taylor (2000, p. 511) that "the environmental justice 'frame' is a

master frame that uses discourse about injustice as an effective mobilizing tool." In other words, frames can mobilize people especially when applying certain frames for certain audiences. The issue or problem frame should tap into people's dreams and fears in their homes and local communities and address their concerns. Thus, communicators must bear in mind that there is no such 'perfect frame' to use with every group; nonetheless, framing can be a useful tool when effectively applied. The communicators need to recognize the real concerns, constraints, and strengths in various communities and use them to promote the issue and mobilize different communities to join the arena of global warming conversation.

Applying these insights to the anti-dam campaign, Twitter accounts of the SuebNakasatien Foundation (seubfd) and Mr. Sasin Chalermklarp (sasin_seub) are analyzed together with #maewong (both in Thai and English). The analysis can be divided into three significant time period: before, during and after the walk.

The top three sets of words from all accounts before the walk consist of the followings:

1. forest, human, lives, do, activity, water, world, MaeWong, project, animals
2. Sueb, Nakasatien, documentary, turn off, lights, fire, 3 years, Sasin, photo
3. Maewong, dam, news, forest, agaist, construction, oppose, watch, shallow

The top three sets of words from all accounts during the walk consist of the followings:

1. dam, walk, feet, group, Sasin, tomorrow, oppose, BKK, sky, Ajarn (professor)

2. diamond, Maewong, dam, forest, conservation, construct, space, use, tiger, EHIA

3. officers, plain, confront, forest, hunt, middle, 2, news, protect, lives

During the walk, the focus of frames from each account consist of the followings:

sasin_seub: walk, BKK, feet, Sasin, group, I, today, support

suebfd: Maewong, feet, walk, dam, forest, EHIA, oppose

#maewong (Thai): dam, maewong, construct, forest, no, Ehia, *No, Dam*, oppose, walk

#maewong (English): dam, people, forest, construct, maewong

The top four sets of words from all accounts after the walk consist of the followings:

1. magazine, record, walk 2013, 345, *EHIA, Maewong*

2. Forest, Sueb, water, activity, Nakasatien, dam, calendar, foundation, Maewong, environment

3. dam, article, Dondahong (name of another dam), project, river, Kong, construct, danger, bye, water animals

Moreover, the highest retweet from the Foundation's account is the one that states: "If the Mae Wong can be constructed, there will be more dams to follow in the conservation area. Let's go against it all the way!" This message was retweeted 751 times. Another top retweeted message (145 times) was when the group has reached Bangkok and rested at the last stop before reaching the final destination at the Bangkok Cultural and Art Center. Meanwhile, the highest retweet from Mr. Sasin's account is "Even though today Channel 9 banned the show, *KonKonKon*

team will post this on YouTube. Please help spread the words." The message, retweeted 659 times, is posted after the cancellation of the show on national television.

After comparing the twitter messages of campaigners, of public in general and of news media, the following frames emerged from the dam construction issue in Thailand:

Issued-based Frame in Public Frame: The overall messages posted, liked, and shared by publics mainly focus on the dam issue. Scientific terms are used together with reference to the environmental experts. The focus is on conservation of forest.

Personal-based Frame in Campaign Frame: Most of the messages posted by the Foundation and Mr. Sasin focused on his walk and his story. Most of keywords found relate to emotional expression. This also includes the conflict of the campaigners with other institute such as Thai government and a national television channel.

Political-based Frame in News Frames: News pieces can be divided into three main groups: supporting the walk, supporting the government and neutral stance. Quantitatively, news reporting on the walk outnumbered the other two groups. Yet, the main frame drawn from the news concentrated on the key actors in this issue. The reports present the issue as political policy and national development plan.

The frames found on social media demonstrate inconsistency in the framing of the issues among the campaigners, the news media and publics. Interestingly, the campaigners tried to apply motivational appeals including sympathy and

warmth (O'Keefe and Sheperd, 2002) in their messages to encourage people to support them. Still, the public retweeted, liked and shared messages that were consisted of facts and evidence on why the dam construction should be cancelled. While both parties focused on the dam and the people, the news media highlighted issues that fall under political frames, including messages and visuals relevant to former prime ministers and their inefficient environmental policies and the current government's directions on environmental movement. Several photos of politicians and government officials are presented and associated with the issue. Despite this inconsistency, the campaign was considered as an effective one due to its impact on change.

Mr. Sasin is also a good example of a well spokesperson, influential person. His strategy went in line with his objectives and his other communication tactics, which include the use of television documentary program to record his walk, his social media to update everyday's activities, and his use of Change.org to circulate action. During his rally, the number of subscribers to file an anti-dam petition reached up to 100,000 names. This is the highest number in Change.org, compared to other petitions in Thailand, where most of them would reach only ten thousands. Thus, Mr. Sasin's determined goals and his planned communication can be considered key factors of success in his attempt to stop the dam construction in Mae Wong.

Finally, there is power behind social media publics--better known as netizens--who can bring virtual pressure into an actual physical environment,

vice versa. In the case of Mr. Sasin, the pressure started with his Facebook and the Foundation's Twitter pages declaring the walk. Subsequently netizens followed the event, made comments, shared stories and even joined the rally themselves. On the final day, with hundreds of supporters gathering at Bangkok Art and Cultural Center, Mr. Sasin was able to successfully deliver his petition to the authority and most notably, attract public attention. It could be argued that the publicity-generated from the affordance of social media-likely motivated authority TO promise to review the dam project. Thus, the campaign achieved its intended goals to both encourage the public to think of environmental issue, as well as to obstruct the dam construction with the support from publics online and offline.

5. Conclusion

There is no magic formula to prepare a campaign to create change in environmental issues. Still, the Mr. Sasin's anti-dam phenomenon is a good example of how planned communication, together with a lifetime dedication of a person toward a cause, can lead to a successful attempt to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves, namely the forest and wildlife. Social media has become a powerful tool for delivering pressing messages to drive public awareness, generate news momentum, and create public engagement via the affordances of the sharing and commenting features in networked communication. Within six months, starting from a strong intent to protect the forest against the dam to a

massive rally with thousands of supporters, Mr. Sasin's effort led to the promise of the Thai government to review and possibly cancel the Mae Wong Dam project. As a whole, this study has revealed the balance between motivational and logical appeals that emerged in the frames of the campaigners and publics. This insight suggests that future campaigns can appropriately combine both appeals to achieve effective social media communication to drive environmental change. In addition, it shows that media relations is still a crucial component in environmental campaigns. Specifically, communicators can utilize media alliance as a strategy to generate

public interest and motivate online and offline action; publicizing and sharing television documentary on social media can help elide censorship, agitate authority, and allow for critical public insights of important environmental issue to drive participation. Yet, future research should shift the focus of study to examine the roles of different media in environmental campaigns and their effectiveness toward enabling change. Public relations may not work as a magic remedy for corporate symptoms, but it can be a good practice for communicating pressing environmental issue through hard work and true dedication of campaigners.

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