

## The Use of Social Media in Improving Institutional Reputation (Case Study of Instagram Social Media @lapas\_wirogunan)

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### Keywords

Institutional Reputation; Instagram; Social Media.

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the use of Instagram social media @lapas\_wirogunan in improving the reputation of Class IIA Prison Yogyakarta. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to understand in depth the digital communication strategies implemented by the institution. Data collection techniques were carried out through digital observations, semi-structured interviews with social media managers, and documentation of uploads and public interactions. Data analysis refers to the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that the use of Instagram was analyzed through the 4Cs digital communication model, namely context, communication, collaboration, and connection. In the context aspect, institutions package content in an informative and transparent manner to build a positive image. In terms of communication, public interaction still tends to be one-way even though private communication through *direct messages* (DM) is actively carried out. The collaboration and connection aspect shows that there is cooperation and sustainable relationships with various stakeholders that strengthen the legitimacy and professionalism of the institution. Overall, Instagram serves as a strategic communication instrument in building an institution's reputation, although audience engagement optimization still needs to be improved.

## INTRODUCTION

The development of communication technology has encouraged organizations and public institutions to adapt to the use of digital media as a means of strategic communication (Badham et al., 2022; Bjola & Manor, 2022; Pöyry et al., 2025; Suparna, 2024). Social media no longer functions simply as a tool for disseminating information, but also as a space for the formation of perceptions, images, and reputations of organizations in the eyes of the public. In this context, the effective use of social media is an important factor for public institutions to increase transparency, build trust, and strengthen relationships with the community (Handayani, 2025; Ngai et al., 2023; Nguyen et al., 2024; Rijal & Saranani, 2023).

Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison or Wirogunan Prison is one of the Correctional Technical Implementation Units under the Regional Office of the Directorate General of Corrections of the Special Region of Yogyakarta which has high historical value because it was established during the Dutch colonial era around 1917 and has been designated as a cultural heritage. This institution has a vision of "The Realization of Professional Correctional Services in Supporting Fair Human Rights-Based Law Enforcement to Realize an Advanced Indonesia that is Sovereign, Independent and Personality, based on Mutual Cooperation". In carrying out its functions, Wirogunan Prison organizes various coaching programs for inmates, such as spiritual coaching, psychological counseling, job skills development, and independence

training that aims to form individuals who are ready to return to society (Class IIA Correctional Institution Yogyakarta, 2025).

Along with the increasing demands for public information disclosure, Wirogunan Prison uses Instagram social media through @lapas\_wirogunan's official account as a means of institutional communication. This account is used to convey information related to coaching activities, public services, and other institutional activities. However, the level of audience engagement seen through indicators such as views, likes, comments, and public responses is still not proportional to the number of followers it has. This condition shows that some audiences tend to be passive, so the use of Instagram as a medium for building institutional reputation still faces challenges in creating active and sustainable interactions (Darmawan et al., 2022; Hu, 2025; San Cornelio et al., 2024; Stanistic, 2025).

In the perspective of mass media theory, the media plays a role as a social institution that is able to shape public opinion and perception through the delivery of broad and consistent messages. However, the development of digital media has shifted the one-way communication pattern to interactive two-way communication, where the audience plays an active role in responding to and interpreting messages. Therefore, the success of digital communication is not only determined by the reach of the message, but also by the level of audience participation in the communication process (Seni Handayani & Junaidi, 2024).

The high number of Instagram users in Indonesia further strengthens the relevance of social media as an organizational communication channel. This platform becomes a digital social space where institutions can build a positive image collectively through the presentation of informative, transparent, and participatory content (Fitria & Sumanti, 2025). For public institutions such as correctional institutions, strategic social media management can help reduce negative stigma while increasing legitimacy in the eyes of the public (Fairuziah et al., 2024).

The use of Instagram @lapas\_wirogunan in improving institutional reputation can be analyzed through the 4Cs digital communication model which includes context, communication, collaboration, and connection. Context is related to how messages are packaged and tailored to the character of the audience, communication emphasizes the process of message delivery and interaction, collaboration reflects public engagement, while connection focuses on building long-term relationships between institutions and society. These four elements play a role in shaping public perception which ultimately determines the reputation of the organization (Sazali & Sukriah, 2021).

Based on this phenomenon, this study focuses on the use of Instagram social media @lapas\_wirogunan in improving the reputation of institutions. The analysis is directed at digital communication strategies, content characteristics, and audience engagement levels as reflected through viewers, likes, comments, and public responses to uploads. This research aims to answer the question of how the use of Instagram social media can support the formation of the reputation of Wirogunan Prison as a transparent and accountable public institution. In addition, this research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of organizational communication studies and digital media, as well as become a practical reference for public institutions in managing social media strategically (Winda et al., 2024).

The urgency of this research is underscored by the critical need for correctional institutions to rehabilitate their public image. Negative perceptions can hinder their ability to

gain public cooperation, attract partners for inmate development programs, and fulfill their broader social mission. In an environment where information spreads rapidly, a poorly managed digital presence can exacerbate reputational risks. Conversely, a strategic and well-executed social media strategy can serve as a powerful tool to demonstrate accountability, showcase the institution's rehabilitative work, and build a narrative of transparency and professionalism. Therefore, understanding how @lapas\_wirogunan manages its digital communication is of immediate practical and theoretical importance.

The novelty of this research lies in its application of the 4Cs digital communication model—context, communication, collaboration, and connection—to analyze the reputation-building efforts of a correctional institution. This model provides a comprehensive framework to dissect not just the content published, but also the underlying communication strategies, the nature of stakeholder engagement, and the long-term relational goals of the institution's digital presence. By applying this lens to a prison context, this study offers a fresh perspective on how public sector organizations with high levels of public scrutiny can navigate the complexities of digital reputation management.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered so that the results of the analysis remain focused and proportional. First, this study only focuses on one social media platform, namely Instagram, so it does not include the use of other social media that may also be used by Wirogunan Prison. Second, the object of the research is limited to @lapas\_wirogunan Instagram account, so that the research findings cannot be generalized widely to all correctional institutions or other public institutions. Third, the analysis of audience engagement in this study is based on publicly visible indicators, such as viewers, likes, comments, and upload responses, so it does not include direct audience perception or internal data of account managers. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to be the basis for further research with a wider scope and approach.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to understand in depth the digital communication strategies applied by the Class IIA Prison Yogyakarta in managing @lapas\_wirogunan Instagram accounts. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the meaning, perspective, and practice of institutional communication in a real-life context. The case study is used to answer exploratory questions about how Instagram is used and why certain communication patterns are more effective in supporting the improvement of institutional reputation (Yin & Campbell, 2018).

The research was carried out at the Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison located on Jalan Tamansiswa Number 6 Yogyakarta, as well as through online observation on the official Instagram account of @lapas\_wirogunan. The research period covers the period from October 2025 to January 2026, which includes data collection, interviews, and digital content analysis.

The subject of the study is a social media manager or Public Relations of Wirogunan Prison who is responsible for content production, information distribution, and digital communication management. The selection of these subjects is based on their strategic role in determining the direction of institutional communication on social media.

Data collection is carried out through three main techniques. First, digital observation was carried out by observing the activity of Instagram accounts, including content

characteristics, frequency of uploads, and patterns of public interaction in the comment column. Second, in-depth interviews with a semi-structured approach were conducted to explore communication strategies, considerations in content selection, and obstacles faced in increasing audience engagement (Winda et al., 2024). Third, documentation is used to collect digital archives in the form of photos, videos, captions, and public statistical data such as the number of likes and comments related to inmate development programs and public services (Nurdin & Hartanti, 2019).

The data analysis technique in this study refers to the model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020) which includes three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is carried out by filtering information from interviews and observations to focus on strategies to improve the institution's reputation. Furthermore, the data was presented in the form of a thematic narrative to identify the pattern of Instagram use by Wirogunan Prison. The final stage is the drawing of conclusions to assess the effectiveness of social media in supporting the formation of organizational reputation based on the theoretical framework of digital media and organizational communication.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses a source triangulation technique by comparing the results of interviews, Instagram upload documents, and the facts of public interaction monitored during observation. This process aims to ensure consistency between the communication strategy planned by the institution and the perception formed in the digital space.

## RESULTS

Based on the process of data collection and analysis through observation, interviews, and documentation, this study identified a number of findings regarding the digital communication strategy implemented by the Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison through the @lapas\_wirogunan Instagram account. The results of this research are presented thematically based on the theoretical framework of the 4Cs, namely *context, communication, collaboration, and connection*, in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of institutional efforts in building and improving organizational reputation.

### **Context Aspects on the Utilization of Social Media in Improving Institutional Reputation.**

In terms of *context*, the use of social media through Instagram account @lapas\_wirogunan focuses on the strategy of compiling and packaging messages before the content is published. The account manager considers the purpose of institutional communication by utilizing the Instagram platform as a means to convey various activities carried out at the Class IIA Prison in Yogyakarta, as well as supporting the disclosure of public information, especially related to visitation services for inmates. This transparency is realized through the publication of various programs for correctional assisted citizens (*WBP*), both self-reliance development such as skills training and personality development oriented to behavior change.

The content presented not only serves as documentation of activities, but also as a strategic effort in building a positive image of the institution. Through the presentation of the coaching process and the disclosure of institutional information, the prison seeks to show that the correctional system has an important role in shaping individuals to become better

individuals, realize mistakes, and be able to return to society as productive and law-abiding citizens. This messaging strategy indirectly contributes to increasing public trust and strengthening the institution's reputation in the eyes of the public.



**Figure 1.** Topic Content Various Activities for Fostering Correctional Assisted Citizens

Some of the content displayed in Figure 1 shows various activities for correctional inmates, such as skills training, religious activities, and personality development programs. The publication of the content reflects the efforts of the Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison in showing transparency in performance while building a positive image of the institution to the community. Through informative visual presentation, the audience can get a real picture of the coaching process carried out, so that it has the potential to increase public trust in correctional institutions.

In addition, the selection of photos and videos is an important element in reinforcing the message. Informative and relevant visuals help the audience understand the institution's activities in a more concrete way. However, in its presentation, there are still certain limitations, especially related to the privacy of inmates and correctional regulations. Therefore, every content must be adjusted to the organization's vision, mission, and values so as not to cause misunderstandings in society.

### **Communication Aspects in the Utilization of Social Media in Improving the Reputation of Institutions**

This aspect refers to how an institution conveys a message, builds interactions, and establishes communication with the audience through social media platforms. This aspect not only focuses on the dissemination of information, but also on the process of exchanging messages between institutions and the public that can shape the perception and image of the organization.

In the context of social media, *communication* It includes several main things, namely the communication pattern used (one-way or two-way), speed and consistency in responding to the audience, openness to questions and criticisms, and the selection of the right communication channel, such as the comment column or *direct message* (*direct message*). Effective communication is characterized by active dialogue, so that the audience feels cared for and appreciated by the institution. (Sari et al., 2025)

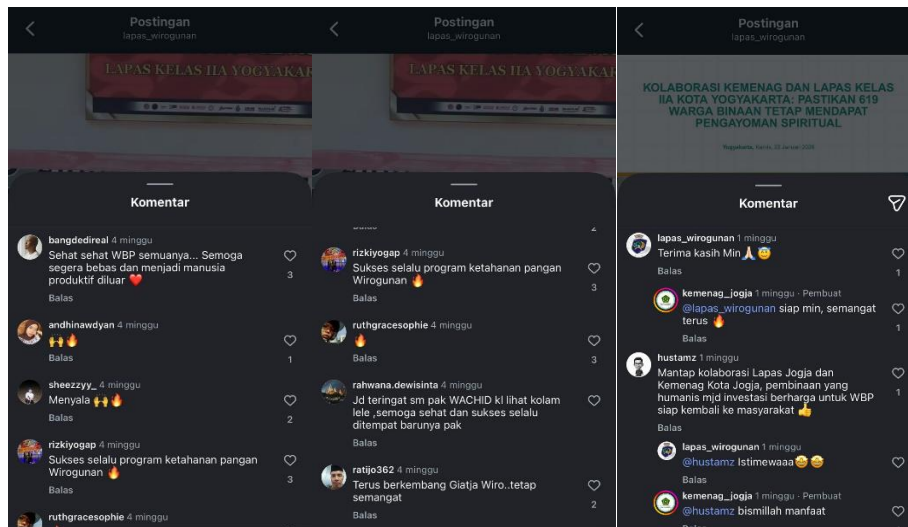


Figure 2. Interaction of comment features on Instagram

Based on the findings on the Instagram account @lapas\_wirogunan, the communication that occurred in the comment column still shows a relatively low response rate from the account manager. The audience often gives comments in the form of responses, as well as forms of appreciation for the content uploaded, but replies from the institution are still rarely seen. This situation indicates that the use of the comment column as a space for public communication has not been running optimally, so the interaction pattern that is formed tends to be one-way. The lack of openly visible responses has the potential to make audiences judge that institutional involvement in digital conversations is still limited.

On the other hand, account managers continue to build interaction with the audience through *Instagram's direct message (DM)* feature. Through a quote during an interview with the manager of @lapas\_wirogunan's Instagram account, that "*We use the direct message (DM) communication feature on Instagram for two-way communication, because it is more private and concerns the personal data of the inmates*". This channel is prioritized because most of the incoming messages are related to correctional inmates, such as requests for information or administrative questions that are personal and sensitive. Therefore, communication is conducted privately to maintain confidentiality and prevent the dissemination of information that cannot be published. This strategy demonstrates the prudence of the institution in managing the flow of information while reflecting responsibility for the protection of individual data.

### **Collaboration Aspects in the Utilization of Social Media in Improving Institutional Reputation**

In the aspect of *collaboration*, Wirogunan Prison shows cooperation with various external parties as a form of participation and involvement between agencies. This aspect refers to how an institution establishes cooperation and involves other parties in digital communication activities carried out through social media. This collaboration can be in the form of cooperation with government agencies, educational institutions, communities, community organizations, and other stakeholders who have a relationship with the institution's programs or activities. (Fares et al., 2021)



**Figure 3.** Content of the Benchmarking Visit Collaboration with Class IIA Jember Prison

One form of collaboration seen on the Instagram account is a benchmarking visit between Jember Prison and Wirogunan Prison. This activity illustrates the exchange of best practices in correctional management. Such collaborative publications give the impression that the institution is actively developing and open to innovation. Based on the results of the interview, the account manager stated that the content as in Figure 3 "*Benchmarking visits are usually carried out when a Technical Implementation Unit or UPT is in the process of building an Integrity Zone. So, prisons or UPTs under the Ministry of Immigration and Corrections that are building an Integrity Zone have the goal of making their work area a Corruption-Free Area (WBK). After that, the next stage is to increase to a Clean and Serving Bureaucratic Area (WBBM). Well, for UPTs that have won the WBK title, such as the Class IIA Prison in Yogyakarta, we are often the target of benchmarking visits from other UPTs that have not received the title. UPTs who come can learn from the experiences and practices that have been applied here. Instead, we also learned from them through interviews and discussions during the visit. So, the process is sharing, collaborating, and strengthening each other.*"



**Figure 4.** Collaborative content with multiple universities

In Figure 4, it can be seen that the Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison has collaborated with several universities to help improve students' understanding of aspects of the law and the correctional system in Indonesia. The account manager explained that "*Study visits from*

*various universities are designed not only to get to know the structure and mechanism of corrections, but also to understand the implementation of the law in the process of fostering and managing inmates directly within the correctional institution".*

Overall, the *collaboration* aspect in the use of Instagram social media @lapas\_wirogunan shows that the Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison seeks to build synergistic relationships with various external parties to support the implementation of institutional programs. Publication of collaborative activities, both with other correctional institutions and universities, not only serves as documentation of activities, but also as a communication strategy to strengthen the institution's image as an open, adaptive, and service-oriented institution. The involvement of various partners also provides positive legitimacy because it shows trust and recognition from external parties in the performance of the institution. Thus, the collaboration that is consistently communicated through social media contributes to improving the reputation of Wirogunan Prison and strengthening public perception of the institution's professionalism.

### **Connection Aspect in the Utilization of Social Media in Improving the Reputation of Institutions**

The *connection* aspect is related to efforts to build long-term sustainable relationships with various stakeholders. Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison uses social media to maintain relationships with government agencies and other institutions, which are then channeled through content on @lapas\_wirogunan accounts.

Based on the findings, the account showed connections with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the police, the fire department, as well as educational and training institutions such as haircut academies that contributed to the inmates' development programs. This relationship reflects cross-sectoral support for correctional activities.



**Figure 5.** Content of long-term cooperation with the Ministry of Religious Affairs and *Arfa Barber Academy*

Figure 5 shows the connection between the Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison and the Ministry of Religion and Arfa Barber Academy in supporting the inmates' development program. The involvement of the Ministry of Religious Affairs reflects the attention to spiritual development as part of the process of character and moral formation of the inmates, a statement from the account manager shows that "*This cooperation ensures that the dynamics in the prison are handled with a humanist approach and extra patience. With the full support of the extension*

*workers, the Ministry of Religion and the prison are committed to equipping the inmates with better character so that they are ready to return to the community later", while the collaboration with Arfa Barber Academy illustrates support for personality development, especially in maintaining neatness, personal hygiene, and increasing the confidence of the inmates during the coaching period. "Through this collaboration, it is hoped that the inmates will not only receive services, but also feel the attention, motivation, and enthusiasm to continue to improve themselves," said the account manager of the Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison.*

This social activity is also proof that the synergy between the community and correctional institutions has an important role in supporting a humane, dignified, and sustainable coaching process. Furthermore, the connections built show that institutions do not work in isolation, but rather become part of a mutually supportive social ecosystem. The presence of external partners in the coaching program strengthens the perception that the prison is committed to improving the quality of services and the success of the social reintegration of the inmates. By displaying these sustainable relationships, social media serves as a means to maintain closeness with stakeholders while showing the accountability of the institution to the public.

The use of Instagram social media @lapas\_wirogunan in improving institutional reputation can be understood through the 4Cs digital communication model which includes *context, communication, collaboration, and connection*. These four aspects show that social media management not only functions as a means of disseminating information, but also as an organizational communication strategy in building public trust and strengthening institutional legitimacy.

In terms of *context*, the results of the study show that the Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison places the preparation and packaging of messages as a strategic step before the content is published. The transparency of the development activities of the inmates displayed through visual content is a form of institutional accountability to the community as well as an effort to reduce negative stigma against correctional institutions. This strategy is in line with the view that social media plays an important role in shaping public perception through the delivery of consistent and informative messages. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media allows organizations to convey information openly so that it can increase the visibility and image of the organization. In addition, the research confirms that information disclosure through digital media contributes to increasing public trust in organizations. Thus, the presentation of coaching content on @lapas\_wirogunan account not only serves as documentation, but also as a reputation strategy that demonstrates the institution's commitment to humanist coaching and oriented towards social reintegration. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Basit & Siddiqui, 2020).

The findings of the study indicate that the communication pattern on Instagram accounts still tends to be one-way, as seen from the lack of managerial response to public comments. This condition has the potential to limit the creation of open dialogue, which is actually the main power of social media in increasing reputation. However, the use of *direct messages* (DM) as a private communication channel shows that there are institutional efforts to maintain the confidentiality of information, especially related to the data of inmates. Theoretically, effective digital communication emphasizes the importance of two-way interaction between organizations and the public. Lovejoy, Waters, and Saxton (2012) state

that organizations that actively respond to audiences on social media tend to be able to build stronger relationships with stakeholders. Therefore, while the private communication strategy through DM reflects the ethical responsibility of institutions, an increased response to public spaces is still needed in order for the reputation as a responsive and transparent institution to be further strengthened. (Lovejoy, Waters, & Saxton, 2012).

In terms of *collaboration*, the results of the study show that Wirogunan Prison actively collaborates with various parties, including other correctional institutions and universities. Publication of activities such as benchmarking visits and academic study visits show the exchange of knowledge and *best practices* that support the improvement of the quality of the institution. Collaboration displayed through social media also gives a positive signal that the organization is adaptive and open to innovation. From the perspective of stakeholder theory, cooperative relationships with various parties can strengthen the legitimacy of the organization. Freeman (2015) explains that the success of the organization is inseparable from its ability to build relationships with relevant stakeholders. Additionally, the research emphasizes that cross-sector collaboration helps organizations increase credibility while expanding the reach of communication. Thus, collaborative content on Instagram accounts not only shows institutional activities, but also serves as a symbolic strategy to show professionalism and external recognition of prison performance. (Freeman, 2015). (Fares et al., 2021)

The *connection* aspect in this study shows that the Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison seeks to build long-term relationships with various partners, such as the Ministry of Religion and skills training institutions. The connection shows that the process of fostering inmates is carried out comprehensively with cross-sectoral support, thereby strengthening public perception of the seriousness of institutions in carrying out correctional functions. Benn, Todd, and Pendleton (2010) affirm that long-term relationships built consistently have an impact on public reputation and trust. Therefore, the connections displayed through Instagram not only reflect the network of partnerships, but also become an indicator that the institution is present as part of a social ecosystem oriented towards coaching and empowerment. (Benn, Todd, & Pendleton, 2010).

Overall, the use of Instagram @lapas\_wirogunan shows that social media has been used as a strategic instrument in building institutional reputation. Transparent message packaging, efforts to maintain communication with audiences, involvement in cross-sector collaboration, and building long-term connections are indicators that institutions are trying to adapt to the demands of digital communication. However, optimizing public interaction is still a challenge that needs to be considered so that the potential of social media as a space for dialogue can be utilized to the fullest. With more interactive and sustainable management, social media has a great opportunity to strengthen the image of the Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison as a professional, transparent, and trusted public institution.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the Instagram social media account @lapas\_wirogunan has acted as a means of strategic communication in supporting the improvement of the reputation of the Class IIA Yogyakarta Prison. In the context aspect, the account manager shows the ability to package messages in an informative and transparent manner through the publication of assisted citizen development activities, thereby helping to

build a positive image and increase public trust. In terms of communication, the interaction pattern still tends to be one-way because responses to public comments are relatively limited, although the use of the *direct message* (DM) feature reflects the institution's commitment to maintaining information privacy and confidentiality. Furthermore, the collaboration and connection aspect shows the existence of cooperation and sustainable relationships with various stakeholders, such as government agencies, educational institutions, and training partners, which indirectly strengthens the legitimacy and professionalism of the institution. Overall, Instagram has been used as an organizational communication instrument to form a positive reputation, but the optimization of audience engagement still needs to be improved so that the function of social media as a dialogue space can run more effectively. Based on the findings and discussions of this study, it is suggested that the Yogyakarta Class IIA Prison improve the quality of two-way communication by more actively responding to public comments selectively without ignoring the principle of information confidentiality. A response that is seen openly can help build the perception of the institution as a responsive and transparent institution. Additionally, social media managers can consider more participatory content strategies, such as providing interactive education, to encourage audience engagement. Institutions are also expected to maintain and expand collaboration with various stakeholders because cross-sector cooperation has proven to be able to strengthen the credibility and image of the organization.

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