

Semiotic Analysis of Comments on X: The Role of @um_fess in Shaping Public Opinion on the Non-Cash Payment Policy at UM

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Cashless; Public Opinion; Semiotics;
Twitter; Diffusion of Innovation

The era of digitalization is an era where digital technologies such as computers and the internet play a major role in various aspects of human life. This era brings a lot of progress and convenience to human life, especially in the economic field. This can be seen from the payment system that began to shift from cash or cash to cashless or the use of e-wallets as payment transactions. This study aims to determine the role of social media X, especially on the @um_fess account, in forming public opinion on non-cash payment policies on the UM campus. In addition, this study wants to find out how social media can strengthen or change public opinion by connecting it with other signs in the social media environment. Researchers also want to know the interpretation of the formed public opinion. This research was conducted using the Content Analysis method with a qualitative approach and refers to the Diffusion of Innovation Theory and Semiotics Theory by Ferdinand De Saussure. The results of this study found that Twitter, especially the @um_fess account, has a role in shaping public opinion regarding non-cash policies on the UM campus. The public opinion formed mostly leads to negative comments and some there are also positive and neutral comments.

1. Introduction

The digital era is a period in which digital technologies such as computers and the internet play a major role in various aspects of human life, including communication, education, economy/business, and entertainment. This era has brought many advancements and conveniences to human life. In the economic sector, there have also been significant developments, as seen in the shift from cash-based payments to cashless transactions or the use of e-wallets for payment. Cashless refers to transactions that do not involve physical money but instead transfer financial information digitally (Farhan, 2023). Digital payments are commonly made using QRIS. QRIS is a standardized QR code used in Indonesia to facilitate electronic payments via smartphones. It integrates various electronic payment methods, such as bank transfers, digital wallets, and credit cards into a single QR code that can be scanned by customers (Bachtiar, 2024).

The use of QRIS has increasingly become a popular trend in Indonesia, including within university environments. Universitas Negeri Malang, as one of the leading universities in Indonesia, has also adopted a cashless payment policy to enhance the efficiency and security of transactions on campus. However, the adoption of this policy is not always well-received by all campus members, particularly students. Social media, as an interactive platform widely used by students, can play an important role in shaping public opinion regarding the cashless payment policy. Base @um_fess, a popular social media account on X among UM students, often serves as a space for discussion and sharing information related to campus life.

The use of the @um_fess base demonstrates that social media can shape public opinion regarding certain events or issues. This can be said because social media operates through the dissemination of

information. If there is something that could potentially spark conflict, social media can clearly be seen influencing public perception. Social media can also serve either positive interests or, conversely, negative ones (Qadri, 2020). Based on the explanation above, the researcher considers the interactions occurring on the @um_fess account regarding opinions on the newly implemented cashless policy to be an interesting subject of study using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic analysis, which focuses on the relationship between signs as a relevant approach to understanding how social media shape's public opinion through the manipulation of signs. Moreover, a social media post can reinforce or alter public opinion by connecting it with other signs within the social media environment.

Based on this background, this study will examine the role of social media, particularly the @um_fess account, in shaping public opinion regarding the cashless payment policy at Universitas Negeri Malang. By understanding how public opinion is formed through interactions on social media, it is expected that the findings will provide better insights for campus management in managing and improving their cashless payment policy.

2. Method

2.1 Type of Research

This research raises descriptive qualitative research methods by utilizing qualitative data which is then described descriptively. According to Rachmat (2006), descriptive research seeks to describe or describe a matter as it is, by using qualitative data will produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. After that, it will be described as a whole to find the results of the writing. This research uses descriptive qualitative research because in conducting this research it is necessary to make direct observations on the base account @um_fess in the X or Twitter application using Ferdinand De Saussure's semiotic analysis method. The focus of the research used through semiotic analysis is the science of signs, especially from Saussure's view which emphasizes the concept of 'signifier' which refers to a tweet upload, and 'signified' which refers to the meaning or interpretation made by users based on their own context, which then this can be used in understanding the signs/symbols and meanings that exist in uploads on the @um_fess base account regarding non-cash policy opinions on the X application.

2.2 Data Sources

The object of research to be studied in this study are several tweets or uploads on the account @um_fess in the Twitter/X application, in this writing not all uploads are studied, researchers examine signs/symbols that refer to meaning in accordance with the title of the research. The unit of analysis studied in this study includes interactions that occur on the @um_fess account, especially on 3 posts on 27/Jan/24, 28/Jan/24, and 31/Jan/24 with the most views and engagement related to non-cash policies on campus. This involves classification and analysis of existing posts, comments, and responses. The data sources taken in this study are primary data obtained directly from the object of research, namely the three tweets with the most comments and retweets and secondary data obtained through journals, books and articles that are relevant and support the focus of related research. The following are 3 tweets that are the source of data for this research:



Figure 1. Tweet 1 and The Comments Section (27/Jan /24)

2.4 Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique in this study employs semiotic analysis as proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure. This analysis processes the data by first identifying, sorting, managing, and synthesizing it to find significant patterns and draw conclusions. After obtaining the data, the researcher classifies it based on Saussure's theory, which includes the concepts of sign, signifier, and signified. The *signifier* refers to the physical form of the sign—in this study, the uploads/tweets regarding the cashless payment policy. Meanwhile, the *signified* is the meaning or concept expressed by a sign, which in this research is represented by netizens comments on the uploads.

The data analysis begins by identifying signs and symbols relevant to the research focus, then classifying them into signs, signifiers, and signifieds. The analytical framework used in this research is as follows:

- Sign: Identifying the signs used, both in the form of narrative comments and memes in tweets from the @um_fess base account regarding the cashless payment policy.
- Signification: Analyzing how these signs carry meaning in the context of the cashless payment policy.
- Signification: Explaining the relationship between the sign (signifier) and the concept it represents (signified) within the tweets from the @um_fess base account.

Once all data has been classified, an interconnection between all texts (symbols) is established, as it is important to consider the overall context of the text and how the signs interact with one another to create meaning. From the analysis of signs, signifiers, and signifieds, an interpretation of the messages conveyed through the texts can be generated, along with their broader implications. Saussure's semiotic analysis tends to involve structuralist interpretations. He argued that language is a system of signs with an internally organized structure. Therefore, it is important to explain the foundations of interpretation used in semiotic analysis (Triya, 2021).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Tweet Analysis

3.1.1 Tweet 1


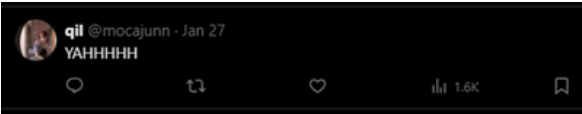
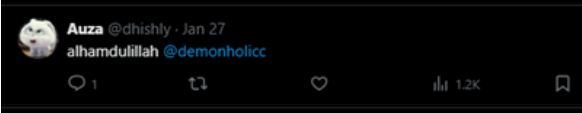
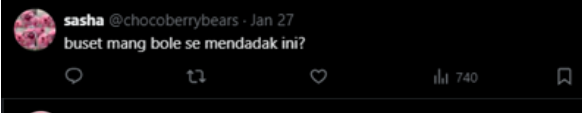
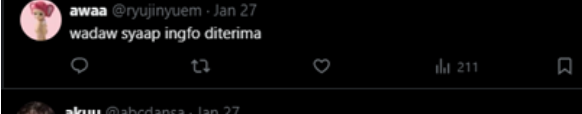
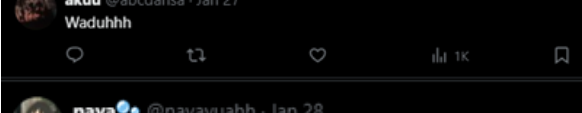
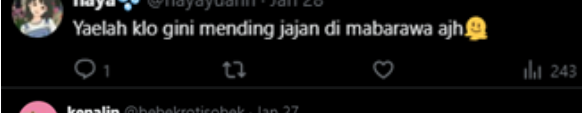
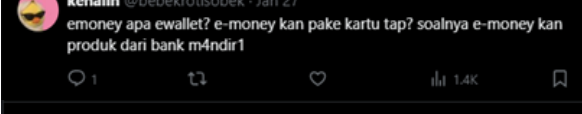

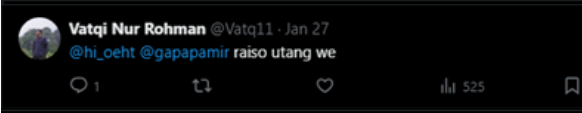

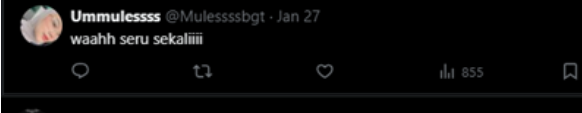
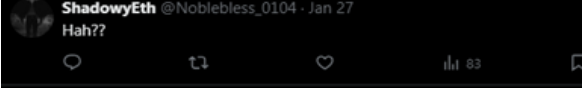


Figure 5. Tweet 1 (27/Jan/24)

The tweet was posted on January 27, 2024, which was one day before the rector's official circular regarding the cashless payment policy in the canteens of Universitas Negeri Malang was distributed. The tweet received 107 comments, 446 likes, and 32,100 views. Thus, this tweet was the first post on the @um_fess base account regarding the cashless payment policy at UM. The content of the tweet reads, "Info A1 rektorat, mulai semester ini kalo mau jajan di seluruh kantin um! wajib pake e-money dan ga nerima pembayaran cash", informing that there is a new policy on the UM campus, namely the implementation of non-cash or cashless payments.

However, the validity of this tweet is uncertain, since the policy was officially announced a day later on e-office after the tweet was posted. The tweet itself does not clearly indicate whether it is in favor of or against the policy. However, the comment section was flooded with various reactions, positive, negative, neutral, as well as surprised responses and questions about the policy. Here are some of the comments on the tweet:

Table 1. Tweet 1 Cashless Payment Policy Content Comments

Tweet 1	Comments
	<p>a. </p> <p>b. </p> <p>c. </p> <p>d. </p> <p>e. </p> <p>f. </p> <p>g. </p> <p>h. </p> <p>i. </p> <p>j. </p> <p>k. </p> <p>l. </p>

As seen from the table, positive comments show support and acceptance of the cashless payment policy at UM. Responses such as “Alhamdulillah”, “waahh seru sekali”, and “knp ga dr dlu 🥳🥳🥳” reflect feelings of gratitude, enthusiasm, and happiness from users. Users feel that this policy aligns with their preferences, and they express approval along with the hope that the policy had been implemented earlier.

Negative comments reflect rejection and criticism of the cashless payment policy. Expressions like “waduhhh”, “YAHHHHH”, and “Oh gini caranya si ptn bh cari duit wkwwk sekalian aja hbs ini bayar parkir jg 🤔🤔🤔” indicate disappointment and cynicism from users. Other comments such as “yaudah ga beli dikantin 😊” and “Ketar ketir pas wifinya lemot kalo ga gitu gaada kuota internet” express concerns about the practical problems that might arise due to this policy.

Neutral comments reflect uncertainty, suggestions, or dilemmas felt by users. Responses like “Hah”, “buset mang bole se mendadak ini?”, and “emoney apa ewallet? E-money kan pake kartutap? Soalnya e-money kan produk dari bank m4ndiri!” show confusion and requests for clarification. Other comments such as “raiso utang we” and “wawad syaap info diterima” reflect dilemmas or the reception of information without expressing either support or rejection.

3.1.2 Tweet 2

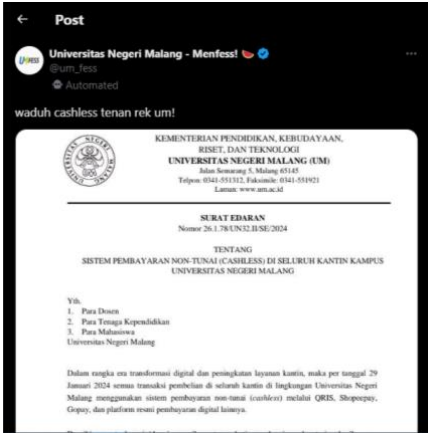

















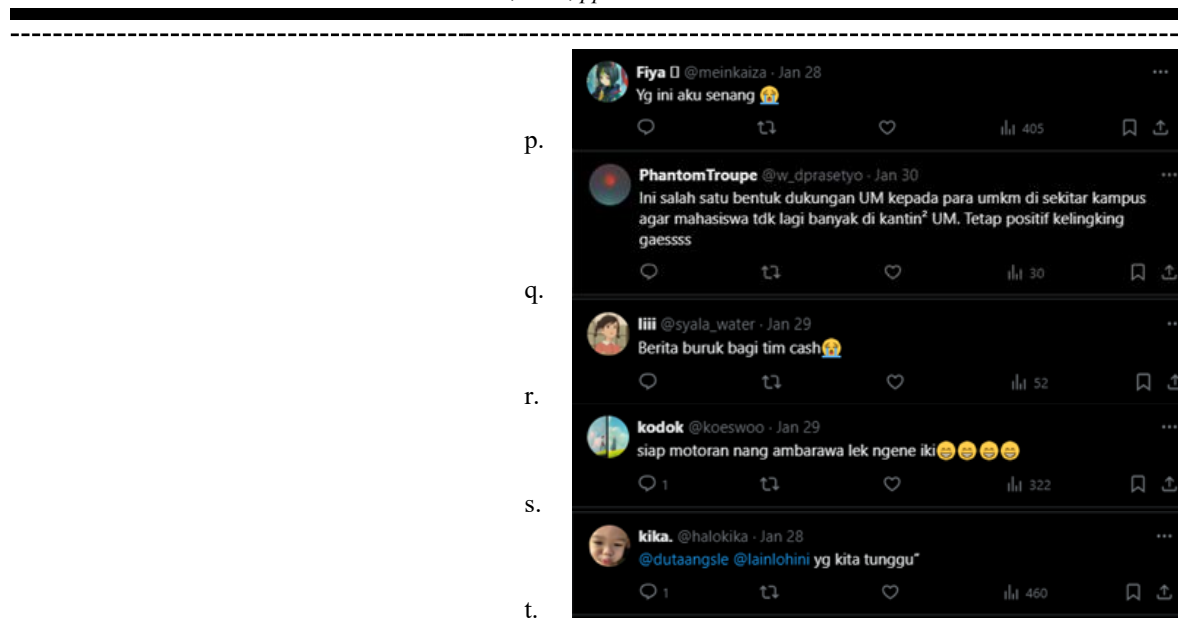
Figure 6. Tweet 2 (28/Jan/24)

The tweet above was posted on January 28, 2024, the same day the rector's official circular regarding the cashless policy in the canteens of Universitas Negeri Malang was distributed via e-office. The tweet received 66 comments, 390 likes, and 25,200 views. The tweet, which reads “waduh cashless tenan rek um!” includes an attached photo showing the official circular announcing the implementation of the cashless transaction policy for all transactions within UM canteens.

This tweet can be considered both an informative post and a reaction to the official announcement of the policy, which had previously, on the January 27, 2024 post, been perceived merely as a rumor among students. In this tweet, by attaching the circular as valid proof of the policy's enactment, the comment section became even livelier and more diverse compared to tweet 1. Below are some of the comments on Tweet 2:

Table 2. Tweet 2 Cashless Payment Policy Content Comments

Tweet 2	Comments
	<p>a.  Damaiya? @iKIMDAYE0N · Jan 28 WOYYY ALHAMDULILAH 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏 PUJI TUHAN SUJUD SYUKURRRR 🙏 🙏🙏 masalahnya sy adalah org yg paling bermasalah dg cash 🙏🙏</p> <p>b.  Penyuka biawak @juraganbiawak · Jan 28 Masa mau njajan aja harus ke ambarawa dulu sii. Kalo aku sii ya tim tunaai. Tim cara klasik</p> <p>c.  Osc5a @PenaOlimpa_ · Jan 29 Cash lebih mudah, top up mulu lama + capek</p> <p>d.  Ciii @lalapo_21 · Jan 28 @aartterry @furenheit @texssast HIDUP CASHLESS</p> <p>e.  ㅌㅌㅌ @onyourbleu · Jan 28 🙄</p> <p>f.  moonlight* @hopeslina · Jan 29 w tim cash dah di tahap hadeh</p> <p>g.  Ara Zy @4ayera · Jan 29 YA ALLAH</p> <p>h.  'aisy @021523 · Jan 29 knapa pd heboh cashless bjir 🙏🙏🙏</p> <p>i.  infonya @jadigimanaa_ · Jan 29 WES MBOHHHH WINGI EDARAN KELUAR MASUK KAMPUS, SAIKI NGENE DUH GUSTI 🙄</p> <p>j.  A @yasmizfara · Jan 28 yang bener aja rugi dong</p> <p>k.  call me 'nei' @aisgrimiksu · Jan 28 ini 100% cashless?? knp ga dijadiin opsi aja sih. kasian yg gada saldo:(</p> <p>l.  Hi Gaez, it's me Gaez @Hi_Gaez_ · Jan 29 Saatnya lebih fokus memajukan umkm sekitar um 🙄</p> <p>m.  gonna be @dnexttopforbes · Jan 28 Yeyyy 🙌🙌🙌</p> <p>n.  maaa @iifadaaa · Jan 28 hmm</p> <p>o.  liii @syala_water · Jan 29 Berita buruk bagi tim cash 🙄</p>



Positive comments show support and acceptance of the cashless payment policy at UM. Responses such as “*HIDUP CASHLESS*”, “*WOYYY ALHAMDULILLAH 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏 PUJI TUHAN SUJUD SYUKURRRR 🙏🙏🙏🙏*”, and “*Yeyyy 🙌🙌*” reflect the joy and relief of users who feel that this policy aligns with their preferences. The expression “*yg kita tunggu*” emphasizes that some users had been waiting for this policy and are happy about its implementation.

Negative comments highlight rejection and criticism of the cashless payment policy. Expressions such as “*ini 100% cashless?? Knp ha dijadiin opsi aja sih. Kasian yg gada saldo:(*” and “*Berita buruk bagi tim cash 😞*” reflect concerns and dissatisfaction with the policy. Other comments like “*Cash lebih mudah, top up mulu lama+capek*” and “*yang bener aja rugi dong*” show resistance to change and a preference for cash payment methods. Comments such as “*WES MBOHHHH WINGI EDARAN KELUAR MASUK KAMPUS, SAIKI NGENE DUH GUSTI 😊*” reflect frustration toward policy changes that are perceived as disruptive.

Neutral comments reflect confusion, dilemmas, or an impartial stance on the cashless payment policy. Expressions such as “*knapa pd heboh cashless bjr 🙄🙄🙄*” and “*hmm*” indicate uncertainty or indifference. Some comments like “*jadi, ada kemungkinan harga di kantin naik gara2 aturan ini, krn UM bakal mengutip 15% (CMIW, dikasih tau orang kantin)*” reflect concerns about the potential impact of the policy without directly expressing support or rejection.

3.1.3 Tweet 3



Figure 7. Tweet 3 (31/Jan/24)

The tweet was posted on January 31, 2024, several days after the cashless transaction policy was implemented across all canteens at Universitas Negeri Malang. The tweet received 39 comments, 326 likes, and 20,000 views.

The tweet that reads “*Gara-gara cashless harga pada naik, babi emang um!*” represents a stance against the cashless payment policy. In the comments section of this post, negative comments are more dominant because the tweet itself already leans toward opposing the policy, prompting

audiences who agree with that opposition to also voice their disapproval. The comments on the third post are even more varied, as the policy had been in effect for several days. They range from testimonies about the policy, protests against the policy, to demands for the policy to be repealed. Here are some of the comments on the third post:

Table 3. Tweet 3 Cashless Payment Policy Content Comments

Tweet 3	Comments
	<p>a. 6 replies, 1 retweet, 57 likes, 4.6K views</p> <p>b. 1 like, 552 views</p> <p>c. 1 reply, 414 views</p> <p>d. 4 likes, 1.7K views</p> <p>e. 376 views</p> <p>f. 671 views</p> <p>g. 334 views</p> <p>h. 623 views</p> <p>i. 816 views</p> <p>j. 472 views</p> <p>k. 1K views</p> <p>l. 291 views</p>

Positive comments show support and acceptance of the cashless payment policy at UM. Responses such as “*metu teko um ae lek gak iso melu kebijakane um*” reflect a firm stance and acceptance of the new policy. This comment indicates that the user agrees with the cashless payment policy and believes that anyone who cannot comply with the policy should either adjust or choose not to participate.

Negative comments highlight rejection and criticism of the cashless payment policy. Expressions like “*UM m nya kapitalis*”, “*um m nya matre*”, and “*kapitalis emg*” reflect strong negative sentiments toward the policy, accusing UM of being an institution that only seeks financial

profit. Comments such as “*demi tuhan 15% gila apa*” and “*UM Mnya morotin mahasiswa 😊 untung udah keluar*” express concerns about additional costs and their impact on students.

Neutral comments reflect confusion, uncertainty, or a non-partisan stance on the cashless payment policy. Responses like “*ada yg marah-marah*” and “*Serius nder???*” indicate uncertainty and a desire to better understand the situation. The comment “*Ramaikan aja komen di ig um, siapa tau membantu*” reflects a more pragmatic approach, encouraging users to voice their opinions on official platforms.

3.2 Signifier and Signified Meaning of @um_fess Base Comment Column

3.2.1 Tweet Comment 1

After reviewing the available comment section, we analyzed it based on Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic theory, namely *signified* and *signifier*. Then, after conducting the analysis, we categorized the comments into positive (accepting the policy), negative (rejecting the policy), and neutral, based on their *signified* and *signifier*. Below is the analysis of the *signified* and *signifier* from the comment section of Post 1:

Table 4. Signified and Signifier Analysis of Post 1 Comments

Comments	Signifier	Signified	Categories
“ <i>waahh seru sekali</i> ”	When writing a happy comment with more than 1 letter.	Indicates that the author of the comment is enthusiastic and excited about the policy.	Positive
“ <i>knp ga dr dlu 😭😭😭</i> ”	Gave a crying emoticon, even up to 3 times.	Describes the feeling of sadness that the new policy is being implemented now and not in the past.	Positive
“ <i>waduhhh</i> ”	Write shocked and disappointed comments with more than 1 letter.	Indicates that the feeling is very disappointed with the policy.	Negative
“ <i>YAHHHHH</i> ”	Write a sad comment with more than 1 letter.	Indicates a sense of great sadness due to the implementation of the policy.	Negative
“ <i>Oh gini caranya si ptn bh cari duit wkwwk sekalian aja hbs ini bayar parkir jg 🤔🤔🤔</i> ”	Putting a laughing emoticon, even up to 3 times.	Depicts 'mockery' and laughs at campus policies.	Negative
“ <i>yaudah ga beli dikantin 😊</i> ”	Putting out the tongue sticking emoticon.	As a form of 'mockery', and if seen from the sentence, it shows a threat not to buy at the canteen.	Negative
“ <i>Yaelah klo gini mending jajan di ambarawa ajh ☐</i> ”	Putting a 'melting' emoticon.	Describes a person who is resigned to choosing to buy food in Ambarawa (off campus) which is a refusal of policy.	Negative

"Ketar ketir pas wifinya lemot kalo ga gitu gaada kuota internet"	Using the word "trepidation"	Describes a sense of apprehension and panic when following the policy.	Negative
"buset mang bole se mendadak ini?"	Use of the words 'buset', 'mang bole' and question words.	Showing shock and confusion towards the policy.	Neutral
"emoney apa ewallet? E-money kan pake kartutap? Soalnya e-money kan produk dari bank m4ndiri"	Use of question words and comments that tend to be longer than other comments.	Demonstrate curiosity and curiosity to further confirm policy regulations.	Neutral

3.2.2 Tweet Comment 2

After reviewing the available comment section, we analyzed it using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory, namely *signified* and *signifier*. Then, after the analysis, we categorized each comment into positive (accepting the policy), negative (rejecting the policy), or neutral, based on its *signified* and *signifier*. Below is the analysis of the *signified* and *signifier* from the comment section of Post 2:

Table 5. Signified and Signifier Analysis of Post 2 Comments

Comments	Signified	Signifier	Categories
"HIDUP CASHLESS"	Use caps lock to write comments.	Showing excitement and affirmation of agreement with the policy.	Positive
"WOYYY ALHAMDULILLAH 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏 PUJI TUHAN SUJUD SYUKURRRR 🙏🙏 🙏 masalahnya sy adalah org yg paling bermasalah dg cash 🙏🙏"	Using gratitude, using capslock, and using the crying emoticon multiple times.	The gratitude sentence shows gratitude for the policy, caps lock shows enthusiasm, and the crying emoticon in this context shows emotion because the policy is enforced, because they feel they have found a solution to their problems.	Positive
"Yeyyy 🤓🙌"	Using the 'glasses' emoticon and two raised hands.	The 'bespectacled' emoticon suggests commenting on policies is something cool and good.	Positive
"Yg ini aku senang 😊"	Using the 'crying' emoticon after the word 'happy'.	The use of a crying emoticon after the word happy indicates that the crying is a happy or positive cry.	Positive
"siap motoran nang ambarawa lek ngene iki 😏😏😏😏"	Using the 'laughing grin' emoticon.	Describing the nature of 'mocking' the policy by belittling and buying food in ambarawa (off campus)	Negative

"ini 100% cashless?? Knp ha dijadiin opsi aja sih. Kasian yg gada saldo:("	Using the 'crying' emoticon.	Describes feelings of sadness and disappointment with the policy.	Negative
"Berita buruk bagi tim cash 🤔"	Use of the word 'bad' and a crying emoticon.	The crying emoticon in this context is crying sadly and disappointed with the policy because it is juxtaposed with 'bad news'.	Negative
"Ini salah satu bentuk dukungan Um kepada para umkm di sekitar kampus agar mahasiswa tdk lagi banyak di kantin2 UM. Tetap positif kelingking gaessss"	Using "pinky positive stay'.	Intended as sarcasm because 'pinky positive' means 'positive thinking', but the previous sentence shows a preference that is not in line with policy.	Negative
"Saatnya lebih fokus memajukan umkm sekitar um 😊"	Using the 'starry' emoticon.	Indicates a sense of passion that is meant to be sarcasm, as the previous sentence is the opposite of policy.	Negative
"😊"	Writing a comment using only a smiley but flat emoticon.	Showing a smile that is resigned to the policy, even to the point of speechlessness is evidenced by the sender only putting an emoticon.	Negative
"WES MBOHHHH WINGI EDARAN KELUAR MASUK KAMPUS, SAIKI NGENE DUH GUSTI 😊"	Write a comment in capslock and put a smiley but flat emoticon.	The use of caps lock shows extreme annoyance and anger because the context of the sentence is disappointment, while the use of a smiley but flat emoticon shows that although he is angry, he is resigned because it will not change anything.	Negative
"knapa pd heboh cashless bjir 🤔 🤔 🤔"	Using the emoticon 'crying' and the word 'bjir'.	The word 'bjir' shows amazement and the emoticon shows surprise as to why everyone is excited about the new policy.	Neutral
"jadi, ada kemungkinan harga di kantin naik gara2 aturan ini,krn UM bakal mengutip 15% (CMIW, dikasih tau	Uses rather long sentences and uses the word 'CMIW'.	The rather long sentence, if seen from the context, shows that the commenter wants to provide information about the policy, but uses the word	Neutral

orang kantin)”

'CMIW' because he is afraid of being attacked if he is misinformed.

3.2.3 Tweet Comment 3

After reviewing the available comment section, we analyzed it using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory, namely *signified* and *signifier*. Then, after conducting the analysis, we categorized the comments as positive (accepting the policy), negative (rejecting the policy), or neutral, based on their *signified* and *signifier*. Below is the analysis of the *signified* and *signifier* from the comment section of Post 3:

Table 6. Signified and Signifier Analysis of Post 3 Comments

Comments	Signified	Signifier	Categories
"metu teko um ae lek gak iso melu kebijakane um"	Using Javanese and negative words.	If you look at the context of the sentence, the commenter is upset with those who disagree with the policy.	Positive
"UM m nya kapitalis"	Using the wrong acronym.	Indicates that it is negative to slur the name of the campus, which means it is disapproving.	Negative
"um m nya matre"	Using the wrong acronym.	Indicates that it is negative to slur the name of the campus, which means it is disapproving.	Negative
"Loooh kan ptn bh, ya harus untung doong"	Uses the word 'fortunately' but is sarcasm.	Shows a sarcastic response that UM as a PTN-BH campus must profit from its policies, which in fact the profit is detrimental to students.	Negative
"UM Mnya morotin mahasiswa 😊 untung udah keluar"	Using the wrong acronym, using the 'awkward smile' emoticon, and using the words 'luckily it's out'.	Using the wrong acronym with a negative word shows opposition to the policy. Using a clumsy emoticon shows a 'speechless' attitude, and the word 'lucky to be out' shows a feeling of happiness that the policy was enacted after he graduated.	Negative
"biar untung 🐷"	The use of the phrase 'fortunately' is juxtaposed with the emoticon 'shocked'.	Showing shock that the campus was implementing the policy only for profit.	Negative
"Emang babi"	Use of the word 'pig'.	Showing a counter attitude	Negative

		for writing negative words when discussing policies.	
“😭😭😭”	The use of the crying emoticon even reached 3 times.	Showing a sad nature that is resigned to the policy, even to the point of speechlessness is evidenced by the sender only putting emoticons.	Negative
”Serius nder???”	Use of the word 'seriously' and interrogative words.	Showing ignorance and just wanting to ask questions.	Neutral
”Ramaikan aja komen di ig um, siapa tau membantu”	Use of the word 'who knows helps'.	Shows comments providing suggestions and solutions to students who disagree with the policy.	Neutral

3.3 Interpretation of Signs and Meanings of Comments of the Three Tweets

In the analysis of comments on @um_fess regarding the cashless payment policy at Universitas Negeri Malang (UM), three main categories emerged: positive, negative, and neutral. Positive comments indicated support and enthusiasm for the new policy, with many users expressing happiness and gratitude that their preference for digital payments is now being accommodated.

On the other hand, negative comments reflected resistance and criticism of the policy. Users offering these responses voiced concerns about potential practical issues, such as technical disruptions or additional costs, and questioned the motivations behind the policy. These criticisms suggest that there is a segment of students who feel the policy does not bring the expected benefits or even adds to their burden.

Neutral comments reflected confusion and the need for further clarification. Users giving such responses were neither fully supportive nor opposed to the policy but were seeking more information to better understand its implications. These neutral comments highlight the importance of clear and transparent communication from policy-makers—namely, the rectorate—to help the campus community understand and accept the changes.

However, judging by the frequency of positive, negative, and neutral comments, negative responses—those rejecting the policy—were the most dominant. Many students felt disadvantaged by the policy. Although there were also positive and neutral comments, their numbers were significantly fewer compared to the negative ones. Students felt that there was no need for a mandatory cashless payment policy. It would be better to allow the use of cashless methods but also provide the option to pay with cash so as not to inconvenience students who do not have mobile banking or e-wallet balances.

Overall, this analysis shows that @um_fess is an important platform for gathering and reflecting public opinion regarding the cashless payment policy at UM. These diverse responses offer valuable insights for policymakers to evaluate and adjust their strategies in order to ensure broader acceptance and address the concerns that have emerged within the university community.

3.4 Discussion

The research findings indicate that the @um_fess account plays a significant role in shaping public opinion among students regarding the cashless payment policy at Universitas Negeri Malang. Most comments are negative, suggesting resistance not to the cashless innovation itself, but to the way the policy was implemented. Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic analysis helps reveal the implicit meanings behind netizens’ comments, where signifiers such as emojis, capital letters, or sarcasm represent signified emotions like rejection, confusion, or even support.

These findings support public opinion theory (Pamungkas, 2020), which asserts that social media has become a new space for expressing responses to policy changes. Furthermore, from the perspective of diffusion of innovation theory (Rogers, in Daryanto, 2014), it can be concluded that not all students are ready to fully adopt digital payment systems—especially without an inclusive socialization process. Thus, policy communication should not be purely top-down; it must also consider grassroots opinions emerging from digital platforms like @um_fess. Failure to understand this dynamic may lead to widespread resistance and weaken the effectiveness of policy implementation.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis above, the researchers conclude that X/Twitter plays a role in shaping public opinion, as it is a social media platform with a very high speed of information dissemination. Within seconds, a tweet can be seen by hundreds or even thousands of users. This speed allows any information to spread easily and influence public perception. Moreover, Twitter enables users to express their opinions or comment freely without cost or specific requirements. This creates the potential for a social movement to begin from small conversations and grow into a larger and more impactful movement. Twitter/X also features likes and retweets, which allow a post to go viral—tweets that are widely liked and retweeted can reach a large audience in a short time, often amplifying certain issues.

Through the @um_fess account, Twitter's role in shaping public opinion is clearly significant. This is evident from the post about the implementation of the cashless policy across all campus canteens at Universitas Negeri Malang, which sparked numerous reactions among students. The researchers verified this through the analysis of three posts dated January 27, 28, and 31, 2024, all discussing the policy. Most of the public responses were negative, although there were also positive and neutral comments. These responses indicate that Twitter, especially the @um_fess account, plays an important role in shaping public opinion regarding the cashless policy on campus, as users are able to freely express their opinions in the comment section—providing valuable feedback for university leaders to understand whether the campus community agrees or disagrees with the policy.

From the research that has been conducted, the author can provide conclusions from the content analysis regarding the non-cash policy enforced on the State University of Malang campus that predominantly refers to negative comments, it can be concluded that many students do not agree with this non-cash policy because some of them think that this policy makes it complicated, increases prices and there are deviant actions such as fraud in the nominal payment to the seller. Therefore, it is better if you want to impose a new policy on the campus environment, a trial period is imposed for some time, if it has a good impact, it can be continued, if it has the opposite impact, it is better to review it first before really deciding to impose a new policy.

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