The Hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp as a Strategy of Taiwan Warm Power Diplomacy

Eva Ermylina^{1*}, Inda Mustika Permata²

Corresponding Author: 61110A007@gms.ndhu.edu.tw

¹Department of Taiwan and Regional Studies, National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan

²Department of International Relations, University of Andalas, Indonesia

DOI: 10.22219/jurnalsospol.v9i1.25665

Abstract

This research intends to analyse diplomacy strategy using the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp to enhance Taiwan's "warm power" in the international community. This paper is qualitative-descriptive research and is analysed by using the concept of digital diplomacy. As a ghost island, Taiwan struggles to be present and seen in the international community. Taiwan's success story in combating the COVID-19 pandemic has changed its global image. Taiwan has actively utilized this situation into political sentiment by campaigning the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp on digital platforms to spreads its warm power and gain international recognition. The use of social media by government actors and activists has engaged awareness of Taiwan's situation from more people. It was begun as a campaign to sound Taiwan's exclusion from WHO and WHA, it later has been used as a slogan to construct Taiwan's image in global presence as a warm, helpful, and friendly country.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi diplomasi menggunakan tagar #TaiwanCanHelp untuk meningkatkan "kekuatan hangat" Taiwan di komunitas internasional. Tulisan ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif dan dianalisis dengan menggunakan konsep diplomasi digital. Sebagai pulau hantu, Taiwan berjuang untuk hadir dan terlihat di komunitas internasional. Kisah sukses Taiwan dalam memerangi pandemi COVID-19 telah mengubah citra globalnya. Taiwan secara aktif memanfaatkan situasi ini menjadi sentimen politik dengan mengkampanyekan tagar #TaiwanCanHelp di platform digital untuk menyebarkan kekuatan hangatnya dan mendapatkan pengakuan internasional. Penggunaan media sosial oleh aktor dan aktivis pemerintah telah menarik perhatian lebih banyak orang mengenai situasi Taiwan. Pada mulanya itu merupakan kampanye untuk menyuarakan pengecualian Taiwan dari WHO dan WHA, namun kemudian digunakan sebagai slogan untuk membangun citra Taiwan di dunia global sebagai negara yang hangat, suka menolong, dan bersahabat.

Keywords

COVID-19 Outbreak, Digital Diplomacy, #TaiwanCanHelp, Warm Power.

Article History

Received March, 20 Revised June, 23 Accepted June, 28 Published June, 30

Corresponding Author

Eva Ermylina. No. 1, Section 2, Daxue Rd, Shoufeng Township, Hualien County, Taiwan 974

Introduction

The conflict between China and Taiwan has created a challenging situation for Taiwan to exist in the international community. China with its One China Policy has taken Taiwan's diplomatic allies and still tempting 14 others to leave Taiwan (Sacks, 2019). Besides, since Tsai Ing-Wen's presidency, China has continued blocking Taiwan from the global arena by excluding Taiwan from international organizations such as World Health Assembly (WHA), International Civil Aviation Organization (CIAO), and Interpol. Even China is gradually erasing Taiwan's existing on civilian sectors (Thu & Yang, 2018). One recent moment that can prove this action is when an actor who played in the "Fast and Furious" movie needed to make an

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

apology video because he mentioned Taiwan as a "country" (Victor, 2021). Those strategy to isolate Taiwan has already impacted Tsai Ing-Wen's ambition to get more support in the global community (Dewi & Dewi, 2019).

Isolation makes Taiwan cannot take part in World Health Organization (WHO) while the world is depended on it during COVID-19 outbreak. However, Taiwan has already utilized the outbreak of covid-19 for its benefit (Maizland, 2023; Sung, 2022). In the middle of isolation, Taiwan has been dealing with the pandemic by itself alone. The narration about "Taiwan, Non-WHO member has successfully combat pandemic" has taken international attention. The island also actively contributes to the neighbours by sending medical masks and is portrayed as a successful "model" in managing the pandemic (Grano, 2022). This positive image has been putting a new idea in Taiwan's diplomacy with a narration "Taiwan can help, and Taiwan is helping".

This effort is officially promoted and goes viral with the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp on social media. #TaiwanCanHelp campaign might reach visibility among societies through internet platforms such as social media and websites. Hence, Taiwan gains this opportunity to spread its "Warm Power" Diplomacy. Warm Power Diplomacy is a concept that explains Taiwan's efforts to build a positive image among international society and to impress people with its warm friendship. Warm Power Diplomacy has emerged to differentiate itself from China's perceived sharp power tactics (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Taiwan, 2019). Taiwan's "warm power" has been promoted along with its initiative "New Southbound Policy" since 2016 and the pandemic has unexpectedly advantaged Taiwan's diplomacy (Hsu, 2019). Different from Taiwan's checkbook diplomacy and steadfast diplomacy (Nemeskeri & Zadori, 2020), Taiwan's warm power diplomacy focuses on promoting Taiwan's image as a responsible, reliable, and benevolent actor on the global stage (Lee, 2020). It can be mentioned that the previous diplomacy strategies of Taiwan have largely focused on maintaining existing diplomatic relationships, countering China's diplomatic pressure, and seeking international recognition. While these strategies also aimed to protect Taiwan's sovereignty and international presence, Warm Power Diplomacy represents a more proactive and comprehensive approach that aims to build positive relationships, diversify partnerships, and promote Taiwan's strengths on the global stage.

Moreover, this article is going to focus on #TaiwanCanHelp as a strategy of Warm Power Diplomacy and aims to explain Taiwan's strategy to enhance its presence in the international community during the covid-19 outbreak. This topic is important to be discussed since most of the researchers are focused on Mask Diplomacy (Kastner, Wang, Pearson, Phillips-Alvarez, & Yinusa, 2022) while Taiwan itself massively promotes #TaiwanCanHelp and intends to spread its "warm power" in order to compete with China's "sharp power" (Sung, 2020). Researching the #TaiwanCanHelp campaign as a strategy of Warm Power Diplomacy during the COVID-19 outbreak holds importance and interest due to its unique diplomatic approach, the competition with China's influence, implications for digital diplomacy, and potential lessons for future global crises. This paper will explain warm power diplomacy, #TaiwanCanHelp Campaign and Taiwan's image during the Covid-19 outbreak and will analyse Taiwan's strategy on the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp to imply its warm power.

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

In this digitalization era, hashtag activism in social media becomes so popular. As a tool to promote various issues from protest to fundraising, it is used to persuade people to be involved in the campaign and tackle the issue. #MeToo movement, #BlackLivesMatter, and #BringBackOurGirls are the example of some famous hashtags activism that brings changes in the policy (Hales & Calderwood, 2017). The hashtag symbol (#) is used to mark the conversation and it serves as indexing that makes searching and collecting information easier. It has a symbiotic relationship with traditional media such as news media to hint at the issue and reach awareness internationally as well as gain elites' attention (Parku & Moscato, 2018). Hashtags activism can facilitate a massive grassroots effort and bring attention beyond online (Dadas, 2018). Since the scope of hashtag activism is very wide, it is sometimes also used as a tool for engaging in public diplomacy and promoting a country's foreign policy (Collins, DeWitt, & LeFebvre, 2019).

Hashtags activism has been advantageous to lift Taiwan's image in the international community. Under some hashtags namely #TWforWHO and #TaiwanCanHelp, Taiwan has politized the pandemic by combining emotional need and political messages to reach its goal that is promoting Taiwan's participation in the global arena (Liu, Ophir, Tsai, Walter, & Himelboim, 2022). Furthermore, Choo et al. specifically explained when and why #TaiwanCanHelp reached its peak and what the discussion in Twitter space using the hashtag is about. During the COVID-19 outbreak, #TaiwanCanHelp has been twitted around 27,552 and it skyrocketed suddenly in April even though the hashtag has existed since 2018. By using the concept of digital diplomacy, it is seen that the success of #TaiwanCanHelp helps Taiwan to increase the exposure of its plight and increase international goodwill (Choo, et al., 2022).

Above all, the hashtag campaign is very useful to increase people's awareness of some issues and by utilizing the hashtag on social media, a country can reach its goal. Taiwan as a "ghost island" has been advantaged by using the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp for its presence in the international community when China's pressure keeps isolating Taiwan in the global arena. However, those articles have not explained Taiwan's goal which is to be seen in international presence as a "warm power". Therefore, this article will focus on how Taiwan uses #TaiwanCanHelp as a strategy to spread its warm power diplomacy.

Theoretical Framework: Digital Diplomacy

This topic is analysed by using a concept of digital diplomacy. The approach was being used since the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp is actively promoted in social media and embracing people's attention through digital platforms. Digital diplomacy is a concept that explained the new era of public diplomacy that use digital technology as a tool. Digitalization has influenced the practice of diplomacy which now has become standard practice for diplomatic institutions or government institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and state leaders to engage domestic or international publics through digital platforms. Most leaders or state institutions in the world have created official social media for instance Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube account, or official website to promote policies or directly communicate with the public (Manor, The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy, 2019). Segev and Manor explained that a state uses social media to achieve its foreign policy goals and manage its national image. By using digital platforms, a state proactively manages their image and use it as a tool in nation-branding

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

activities. The goal is no longer influence foreign governments but rather on influencing foreign public to create friendly environment for foreign policy goals and the promotion of national interest (Manor & Segev, America's Selfie: How the US Potrays Itself on Its Social Media Accounts, 2015). Manor re-defined digital diplomacy as not only limited to social media but the overall impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) such as Skype, Email, WhatsApp, and other Smartphones Application (Manor, The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Terminology, 2018).

Additionally, social media enable two-way communications and engagement between institutions and the public will help to overcome some obstacles to promote concrete actions taken by a nation in the global arena. This is also will leave a direct impression on people and will create long-lasting relationships between the government and the foreign public (Manor & Segev, America's Selfie: How the US Potrays Itself on Its Social Media Accounts, 2015). In Taiwan's case, social media and digital platforms are very helpful to overcome the barriers that Taiwan faces in traditional diplomacy way. It is very difficult for Taiwan to be active in the international arena because of China's pressure and isolation. By engaging with the foreign public through digital platforms, Taiwan might win people's hearts and take place in the global community. Therefore, digital diplomacy is a suitable concept to explain Taiwan's behaviour and strategy on #TaiwanCanHelp to emerge its warm power.

Result and Discussion Warm Power Diplomacy

In the middle of political isolation from the international presence, Taiwan has formulized a new initiative to show its sparkle using Warm Power Diplomacy. This diplomatic strategy was introduced together with the promotion of the New Southbound Policy (Ermylina, 2020). Taiwan attempts to elevate its ties with other countries through its collaboration in sciences, technology, and culture. These efforts are called "warm power" diplomacy since Taiwan shows its warm and friendly attitude toward its partners (MOST GASE, 2020). Sharing resources, experiences, and supports are the main practice of warm power diplomacy (Chain, 2021).

There are three main goals of warm power diplomacy. First, Taiwan means to make other countries especially the public feel the warmness and goodwill of the Taiwanese government and people. Under New Southbound Policy, Taiwan emphasized people-to-people interactions in order to build a strong understanding among the societies. Through programs focusing on sharing experiences such as talent cultivation, cultural exchange, technology, and industry development, people are expected to be aware of Taiwan's positive contribution. All these efforts are meant to let people recognize Taiwan as "a solution rather than a problem" to regional stability and global development (Yang & Chen, 2019).

Secondly, Taiwan's goal is to connect Taiwan with other countries to create innovative development. As the "One China Policy" and the forces from China have been tugging Taiwan's position in international associations, it is arduous for Taiwan to tie inter-governmental cooperations. Therefore, connecting Taiwan to the world by strengthening civic collaboration, for instance, Taiwan initiates a forum called "Yushan Forum" in 2017. This forum is a platform for Asian dialogue to expand multifaceted opportunities for cooperation and the exchange of innovative ideas. The annual meeting has been attended by political leaders, thinkers, innovators, and young leaders across regions from over 20 countries. To be sure, the event is held to deepen Taiwan's partnership with other nations as well as demonstrate warm friendship (Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation, 2018).

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

Third, Taiwan hopes to establish a long-term and stable collaboration. As a strategy to leverage Taiwan's regional integration, Taiwan has actively promoted its New Southbound Policy. This partnership is not only tightening economic relations but also the social-cultural aspects. This strategy is to endeavour Taiwan's close friendship in the world to fight "isolation" from the mainland (Glaser, Kennedy, & Mitchell, 2018). The statement of President Tsai Ing-Wen on National Day 2018 mentioned "when the world really sees the beauty of Taiwan, Taiwan will never be alone", it clearly indicates Taiwan's interest to be seen as a warm and sincere partner and gaining more opportunities to take part in the international arena (Office of The President Republic of China (Taiwan), 2018).

Additionally, Taiwan has promoted the value of democracy and experience in digital governance to elevate its international standing and cooperation with other countries through warm power diplomacy (Chang, 2019). In 2018, Taiwan's Minister of Digital Affairs, Tang Feng visited New York with the purpose of sharing Taiwan's digital experience and mentioning that openness and relation between public-government is Taiwan's "warm power". She emphasized digitalization in Taiwan is aligned with the global goal that is poured into SDG's target. This agenda indicates Taiwan's effort to break through its diplomatic challenges by engaging public elements (Junshuo, 2018).

On other hand, far before the outbreak, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been promoting the motto "Taiwan Can Help" as a strategy to widen Warm Power Diplomacy's impact. This motto appeared when Taiwan asked for global support to let Taiwan joins WHO and becomes an observer in WHA. Taiwan has success history of combating some diseases outbreak such as SARS 2003 and through those experiences, Taiwan intends to be a reference for disease prevention efforts and contribute to the world. In real action, Taiwan has trained medical professionals from some countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), 2019). Subsequently, this motto went viral when COVID-19 outbreak attacked all places in the world. Taiwan has won public's heart because its success efforts on handling the diseases alone without WHO, even helping other nations by sending masks and other forms of help. This motto became famous with the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp on social media and other internet platforms.

#TaiwanCanHelp Campaign and Taiwan's Image During COVID-19 Outbreak

Even though the pressure from mainland China still became a barrier for Taiwan to exist in the world, Taiwan actively promoted the motto "Taiwan Can Help and Taiwan is Helping". Basically, the hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp appeared for the first time on Twitter around 31 March 2018 in a post from a Taiwanese citizen. However, Taiwan's Digital Minister, Tang Feng (Audrey Tang) has claimed in many interviews that she is the originator of the slogan to seek a diplomatic breakthrough. She had been distributing name cards and stickers printed with the slogan at conferences and events to increase awareness of Taiwan's circumstances. The hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp further officially used by Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and President Tsai Ing-Wen on social media since April 2018 to advocate Taiwan's international standing on various issues (Choo, et al., 2022).

#TaiwanCanHelp gained momentum during the COVID-19 outbreak. #TaiwanCanHelp has been tweeted more than 27,552 which is the English-only tweet from March 2018 to June 2020 and it reached the peak in April 2020. The hashtags overwhelmingly mentioned 23.8 times higher than in the past 2 years around 26,443 tweets. The tweets were not only from Taiwan but from all over the world. It can be seen in figure 5, the hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp has been voiced from 120 countries and two special administrative regions, Hong Kong and Macau. The hashtag has raised its engagement due to Taiwan's successful containment of the virus and in the harsh situation still donated medical equipment including masks to other countries. In general, the

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

tweets using #TaiwanCanHelp expressed sympathy and positive sentiment toward Taiwan's situation (Choo, et al., 2022).

Furthermore, one moment that engages the public's awareness of the #TaiwanCanHelp is the allegation of WHO Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. On 8 April 2020, he accused Taiwan of a racist attack toward him. According to Tedros, Taiwan has politicized the outbreak to attack WHO and claimed that the Taiwanese government has attacked him for racism against Africans. This was started when an online petition "Change.org" campaigning to replace him from the leadership of WHO, as well as political cartoons and internet memes, mock him as China's puppet. He alleged Taiwan was the actor behind this "cyber-army". However, this accusation does not have strong evidence. It can be understood that the public's reaction on social media has been ignited because Bruce Aylward, assistant director-general of the WHO attempted to hang up the call interview with Radio Television Hong Kong when he was asked about Taiwan's exclusion from WHO. The netizens then criticized Tedros's leadership and praised Taiwan's successful efforts in combating the virus. A few weeks after this incident, Tedros appeared at a conference and significantly alleged Taiwan on racist insult. Also, this seems shallow since there is no campaign specifically toward him from the Taiwanese government nor involved racism in campaigning exclusion of Taiwan from the WHO (Hioe, 2020).

Taiwan's government has responded and denied Tedros's allegation. Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) the following day released statements that contained some points. First, Taiwan is profoundly regretful and had a strong protest regarding the baseless allegation as well as demanded clarification and apology. Second, MOFA does not have control over personal expressions of opinion from the people, and the criticism on the internet is not associated with the government. Lastly, Taiwan is willing to participate in both WHO and WHA to contribute to the world's covid recovery actively. It was also mentioned that WHO should put political agenda aside and maintain neutrality and professionalism (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of China (Taiwan), 2020). Besides, President Tsai Ing-Wen responded to the accusation on Facebook and Twitter by inviting Director-General Tedros to visit Taiwan and see how the Taiwanese committed to contributing to the world even in the face of isolation and discrimination (Aspinwall, 2020). People especially the Taiwanese are furious about this issue and their sympathy toward Taiwan has skyrocketed Taiwan's presence on the air. This drama has been engaging the global community on the hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp campaign.

Another spike that has signified #TaiwanCanHelp is a full-page advertisement in the New York Times. The advertisement was initiated by Taiwanese YouTuber, Ray Du, and Watchout co-founder, Zuyi Lin who promoted a crowdfunding campaign. This was the real action from the civil societies who are furious about WHO Director-General's allegation. The campaign successfully raised over NT\$ 19 million, five times its original goal. A website with the domain taiwancanhelp.us was also launched by the organizer that features a COVID timeline and media coverage (Li, 2021). The campaign becomes a wave of activism works with the viral hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp to garner much attention from domestic and international publics on both conventional media and digital platforms (Yen, 2020).

While civil societies and Taiwan's politicians actively involved in the #TaiwanCanHelp campaign, the hashtags were also got attention from global leaders. Many politicians from all over the world and foreign government official account have shown sympathy toward Taiwan. For instance, On 10 November 2020, Official twitter account of US Mission to UN in Geneva @usmissiongeneva uploaded a picture of Ambassador Bremberg with the #TaiwanCanHelp which displayed him standing in front of colourful structure of the hashtags (小粉紅氣炸!美國駐聯大使率先合照#TaiwanCanHelp地標, 2020). These voices from public figures have spread and expanded #TaiwanCanHelp to the broader social reach.

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

Hence, many scholars argue that the COVID-19 outbreak has been becoming a victory moment for Taiwan's image in international space. The #TaiwanCanHelp successfully increased the exposure of Taiwan's plight and international goodwill (Huang, 2020). The image as a solo warrior in combating covid, as a model for epidemic prevention, and as an ostracised country have become Taiwan's brand that earned sympathy from the public. Therefore, the image is the result of the effort of public diplomacy that utilizes a health narrative into political sentiment.

The Hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp as a Strategy of Taiwan Warm Power Diplomacy

The COVID-19 outbreak has been brought many difficulties for many countries, yet it has advantaged Taiwan's framing in the global. Taiwan has been praised for its success scenario on dealing the pandemic and wrapped it with political sentiment as a country that got bullied and intimidated by China (Yip, 2021), it has been embraced people's attention globally. The sudden escalation of engagement to #TaiwanCanHelp in April 2020 showed that the outbreak has benefit Taiwan's effort on blooming its international image.

Taiwan has been using #TaiwanCanHelp as its digital diplomacy by involving government actors, engaging in public activism, using digital platforms as well as traditional media, and influencing the global public. The slogan "Taiwan Can Help" was first used by the Minister of Digital Affairs in 2018 on gaining more awareness of Taiwan's situation. Then it was officially used by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as President Tsai Ing-Wen. Tsai Ing-Wen actively tweeted on her official account and used #TaiwanCanHelp with narration that mostly about Taiwan is helping and no one can leave behind to promote equity and properties (Tsai Ing Wen Official Twitter Account, n.d.). Additionally, on an official Youtube channel "Public Digital Innovation Space" which owned by Ministry of Digital Affairs, a touching video with title "A True Friend - Taiwan Can Help" was published on 07 September 2019 (PDIS, 2019). The video is a monolog poetic narration, telling a massage about "true friend" and using #TaiwanCanHelp. It frames Taiwan as a true friend that never abandoned anyone no matter what the conditions are, always being respectful, and help one another over the finish line. On the video also campaigns implicitly about Taiwan deserves a seat in WHO and WHA. Afterward, the hashtag gains its massive engagement not only in official governmental works alone but the civil society as a public actor also has been involved in the campaign.

Public activism in the hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp has ignited awareness of Taiwan. The Fund rising that was promoted by civil societies has successfully hints at the participation of #TaiwanCanHelp. It could fund a huge advertisement promoting #TaiwanCanHelp that spotted places billboard in New York Times. Displaying a huge screen in the center of New York City must intend to catch people's eyes, not only U.S citizens but all people around the world. The activists also created a website taiwancanhelp.us to enlarge the activism not only limited to Twitter but provide information related to what Taiwan has done. One touching message is stated clearly on the web "You are not alone. Taiwan is with you. We know what you are going through. We know how hard it is." (Backer Founder, 2020). It earns the narration about Taiwan can help and Taiwan is helping. #TaiwanCanHelp indicates pure Taiwan's interest in helping others. The narration has been successfully gaining international sympathy toward Taiwan.

Consequently, the actions mentioned above are the strategy of warm power diplomacy. The hashtags #TaiwanCanHelp can achieve warm power diplomacy such as #TaiwanCanHelp can make the public from other countries feel the warmness and goodwill that Taiwan possesses. Under campaign #TaiwanCanHelp, Taiwan's International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) has been carrying out several projects including cooperating with NGOs in some countries to train healthcare workers and contributing to the literature on using digital health technologies (Taiwan ICDF, 2022). Taiwan also shipped hundreds of medical masks and health equipment to several countries with a big "Taiwan Can Help" logo (MOFA, RoC (Taiwan),

ISSN 2088-8090 (Print) ISSN 2597-6648 (Online) Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 9 No 1 (2023), pp.129-139

2020). Those real actions and wrapped with touching narration intend to promote Taiwan's image as a "warm power".

#TaiwanCanHelp might connect Taiwan with other countries without spark any conflicts due to One China Policy. Taiwan does not have broad access to international arena because of China's pressure, hence internet platforms is a great solution for Taiwan to spread its "warm power". Through digital platform, it can be accessed openly by anybody and anywhere without any border and limit. The hashtag #TaiwanCanHelp on social media connects Taiwan with public from foreign countries. On a video to thank one million followers on twitter account, Tsai Ing-Wen mentioned that social media helps Taiwan connects with the world. Engaging with the world is Taiwan's interest and social media facilitates Taiwan to enter global conversation. There, Tsai Ing-Wen also mentioned Taiwan want to share hope for brighter tomorrow. Following this, some global leaders thanked Taiwan for sending medical equipment and sharing expertise in fight against COVID-19 (ETtoday News, 2020). It is seen that Taiwan wants to gain compassion from people around the world by utilizing digital platforms and frame its image as a helpful and warm power.

Taiwan's goal to have long term and stable collaboration also will be reached on this digital diplomacy. It can be seen directly, but people perception and sympathy will stay longer. It has a big opportunity to tightening Taiwan's relation and Taiwan's presence in international and further will be seen as a positive contributor for global development. As what the slogan indicates "Taiwan Can Help", Taiwan has narrated itself as a friendly actor that will help the global. The narration has been successfully gaining international sympathy toward Taiwan. In other words, Taiwan wants to be seen as a warm power and then they can recognize Taiwan as a solution, rather than a problem.

Conclusion

Taiwan has been having a tough condition due to China's efforts on kicking Taiwan from the international arena. In contrast, the COVID-19 outbreak has been changing Taiwan's image in the international community from "a ghost island" to a "pandemic warrior". The success story of combating the outbreak has engaged the public's awareness of Taiwan's exclusion from WHO and WHA. Moreover, Taiwan has utilized this situation to shift Taiwan's global image and use #TaiwanCanHelp to gain people's sympathy. #TaiwanCanHelp is a tool in Taiwan's digital diplomacy. In the digital era, the society seems borderless since people from around the world can see and engage with the issue beyond its own country. By using digital platform, Taiwan engages people from all over the world to notice and aware of Taiwan's issue which is being corner from global community. Through #TaiwanCanHelp, Taiwan wants to be seen as a warm power and contributes to global development.

References

Aspinwall, N. (2020, April 10). sai Rejects Accusations Taiwan Attacked WHO Chief, Invites Him to Visit.

Retrieved October 26, 2022, from https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/tsai-rejects-accusations-taiwan-attacked-who-chief-invites-him-to-visit/

Backer Founder. (2020, April). *Taiwan Can Help*. Retrieved November 08, 2022, from https://taiwancanhelp.us/

Chain, B. (2021). To Deepen and Broaden Our Presence:" Taiwan's Strategies for Participating in the International System. Retrieved October 06, 2022, from China Center:

- https://www.chinacenter.net/2021/china_currents/20-1/to-deepen-and-broaden-our-presence-taiwans-strategies-for-participating-in-the-international-system/
- Chang, I.-w. J. (2019). Taiwan's "Warm Power": Sharing Lessons on Digital Governance. (R. Hsiao, Ed.) Global Taiwan Brief, 4(23).
- Choo, S.-M., Lim, E. C., Chang, C.-T., Li, Y.-C., Chang, Y.-C., & Syed-Abdul, S. (2022, July-September). How #TaiwanCanHelp Reverberates: An Exploratory Analysis of Advocacy Hashtag on Twitter. *Social Media* + *Society*, 1-17.
- Collins, S. D., DeWitt, J. R., & LeFebvre, R. K. (2019). Hashtag diplomacy: twitter as a tool for engaging in public diplomacy and promoting US foreign policy. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 78–96. doi:DOI:10.1057/s41254-019-00119-5
- Dadas, C. (2018). Hastags Activism: The Promise and Risk of Attention. In D. M. Walls, & S. Vie, *Social Writing/Social Media: Publics, Presentations, and Pedagogies* (pp. 17-36). Colorado: The WAC Clearinghouse. doi:DOI: 10.37514/PER-B.2017.0063
- Dewi, I. F., & Dewi, K. U. (2019, October). Strategi Pemerintahan Xi Jinping terhadap Taiwan dalam Mengamankan Kedaulatan Tiongkok. *Jurnal Hubungan International*, 7(2), 161-168.
- Ermylina, E. (2020, Oktober). Taiwan's Interest on Increaseing People to People Ties under New Southbound Policy. *Skripsi*. Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang.
- ETtoday News. (2020, April 18). Twitter broke a million! Tsai Ing-wen recorded a video telling "Taiwan's Epidemic Prevention Story" | TaiwanCanHelp | TaiwanIsHelping. Retrieved November 08, 2022, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSiYrgO08Jg
- Glaser, B. S., Kennedy, S., & Mitchell, D. (2018). *The New Southbound Policy: Deepening Taiwas Regional Integration*. Lanham: Center for Strategic and International Studies.
- Grano, S. (2022, April). Retrieved October 01, 2022, from Taiwan Insight: https://taiwaninsight.org/2022/04/20/cat-warriors-vs-wolf-warriors-how-taiwan-promotes-its-brand-in-the-face-of-a-more-assertive-china/
- Hales, J. H., & Calderwood, I. (2017, August 24). 8 Massive Moments When Hashtag Activism Really Worked. Retrieved November 06, 2022, from https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/hashtag-activism-hashtag10-twitter-trends-dresslik/
- Hioe, B. (2020, April 09). WHO Director-General Accuses Taiwan of Campaign Againts Him Involving "Racism" Againts Africans. Retrieved October 24, 2022, from New Bloom: Radical Perspective on Taiwan and Asia Pacific: https://newbloommag.net/2020/04/09/tedros-racism-comments/
- Hsu, S. (2019). *Taiwan's 'Warm Power' will Beat China*. Retrieved October 1, 2022, from https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2019/03/13/2003711395
- Huang, S.-M. (2020, June). #TaiwanCanHelp: Riding vs. Confronting the COVID-19 Crisis in Taiwan. Global-e Journal Series Pandemic: Border-Crossing Caveats, 13(34). Retrieved from https://globalejournal.org/global-e/june-2020/taiwancanhelp-riding-vs-confronting-covid-19-crisis-taiwan
- Junshuo, C. (2018, June 18). Tang Feng New York Shares Digital Governance Warm Power Diplomacy Seeds.
 Retrieved October 10, 2022, from
 https://www.cna.com.tw/news/firstnews/201806180019.aspx
- Kastner, S. L., Wang, G., Pearson, M. M., Phillips-Alvarez, L., & Yinusa, J. (2022). "Taiwan and the "One-China Principle" in the Age of COVID-19: Assessing the Determinants and Limits of Chinese Influence. *The China Quarterly*, 1-21.
- Li, J. (2021, April 29). #LetTaiwanHelp: What Taiwan's Hashtag Diplomacy Is About. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from https://international.thenewslens.com/article/150349
- Liu, A. K., Ophir, Y., Tsai, S.-A., Walter, D., & Himelboim, I. (2022). Hashtag activism in a politicized pandemic: Framing the campaign to include Taiwan in the World Health Organization's efforts

- to combat COVID-19. *new media & society*, 1-22. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448221099173
- Manor, I. (2018, January). The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Terminology. *Working Paper University of Oxford*. Retrieved from https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/sites/www.odid.ox.ac.uk/files/DigDiploROxWP2.pdf
- Manor, I. (2019). The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Manor, I., & Segev, E. (2015). America's Selfie: How the US Potrays Itself on Its Social Media Accounts. *Digital Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, 89-108.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of China (Taiwan). (2020, April 9). MOFA deeply regrets baseless accusations by WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from https://en.mofa.gov.tw/News_Content.aspx?n=1328&s=91696
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan). (2019, March 15). Health for All— Taiwan Can Help. Retrieved October 10, 2022, from https://en.mofa.gov.tw/News_Content.aspx?n=e641f7ff2ae058a1&sms=49ff69f409088525&s=e2eab62fc6165c63
- MOFA, RoC (Taiwan). (2020, April 10). *Taiwan donates further 6M surgical masks to help combat coronavirus*. Retrieved November 08, 2022, from https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?unit=2&post=175219
- MOST GASE. (2020, September 24). New Southbound Policy Strengthens Taiwan's Collaboration with Southeast Asian Country. Retrieved October 10, 2022, from https://trh.gase.most.ntnu.edu.tw/en/article/content/155
- Office of The President Republic of China (Taiwan). (2018, October 10). *President Tsai delivers 2018 National Day Address*. Retrieved October 09, 2022, from https://english.president.gov.tw/News/5548
- Parku, S. S., & Moscato, D. (2018). Hashtag Activism as a Form of Political Action: A Qualitative Analysis of the #BringBackOurGirls Campaign in Nigerian, UK, and U.S. Press. *International Journal of Communication*, 2480–2502.
- PDIS. (2019, September 07). A True Friend Taiwan Can Help. Retrieved November 08, 2022, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jX22mdMnEqE
- Sacks, D. (2019, November 1). China's Efforts to Diplomatically Isolate Taiwan Could Backfire. Retrieved October 01, 2022, from The National Interest: https://nationalinterest.org/feature/chinasefforts-diplomatically-isolate-taiwan-could-backfire-92886
- Sung, W.-T. (2020, May). Taiwan's COVID-19 Diplomacy and WHO Participation: Losing The Battle But Winning The War. *PACNET*. Retrieved from https://pacforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/20200529_PacNet_31-1.pdf
- Taiwan ICDF. (2022, April 07). *TaiwanICDF's Response in Public Health and Medicine*. Retrieved November 2022, 2022, from https://www.icdf.org.tw/wSite/ct?xItem=59071&ctNode=31797&mp=2
- Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation. (2018). *Yushan Forum*. Retrieved October 10, 2022, from https://www.taef.org/2018yushanforu
- Thu, H. L., & Yang, A. H. (2018, August 18). THE POLITICS OF ERASING TAIWAN. Retrieved 10 01, 2022, from Taiwan Insight: https://taiwaninsight.org/2018/08/14/the-politics-of-erasing-taiwan/
- Tsai Ing Wen Official Twitter Account. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://twitter.com/iingwen
- Victor, D. (2021, May 25). John Cena Apologizes to China for Calling Taiwan a Country. Retrieved 10 01, 2022, from The New York Times: https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/25/world/asia/john-cenataiwan-apology.html

- Yang, A. H., & Chen, D.-L. (2019, October 18). *The Yushan Forum and Taiwan's Warm Power*. Retrieved October 06, 2022, from Foreign Policy Research Institute: https://www.fpri.org/article/2019/10/the-yushan-forum-and-taiwans-warm-power/
- Yen, W.-T. (2020). Taiwan's COVID-19 Management: Developmental State, Digital Governance, and State-Society Synergy. *Wiley Public Health Emergency Collection, 12*(3), 455-468. doi:10.1111/aspp.12541
- Yip, H. (2021, April 05). *Taiwan's COVID-19 Success Is Worryingly Smug*. Retrieved November 07, 2022, from https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/04/05/taiwan-covid-19-success-china-military-threat/
- 小粉紅氣炸! 美國駐聯大使率先合照#TaiwanCanHelp地標. (2020, November 11). Retrieved October 27, 2022, from https://news.ltn.com.tw/news/world/breakingnews/3348088