From Public Administration to Memes: How does the Taiwanese Ministries' meme usage on social media affect citizen reaction and engagement?

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Abstract

Social media has become a critical avenue for government to disseminate information, foster government-citizen communication, and engage the public. This study investigates the impact of Taiwan's ministries' meme usage on Facebook and citizen reactions and engagement toward those memes. While existing literature has explored social media's role in the government's social media usage and humor's potential in digital communication, the role of memes in public administration's online communicative strategies remains understudied. This paper reveals that memes can foster a positive perception of the government, community building, and public service delivery through conducting a content analysis on the memes posted by the ministries and the comments reactions to those memes. However, the government should consider employing humor styles and types that are more aligned with the citizens' preferences. These findings provide valuable insights for public administrators, highlighting the memes' potential to build the government's reputation and initiate dialogue with citizens. This paper contributes to a broader understanding of the government's strategies for digital communication, offering practical suggestions while contributing to the academic communities by revealing memes' potential in civic engagement and strategic communication.

Acknowledgments

This thesis is a challenging academic experience for me, and I will not be able to complete it without continuous support from my thesis supervisor, my peers, and my boyfriend. My boyfriend's persistent love and care have supported me throughout the difficult journey of writing the thesis, and I am extremely grateful to always have him by my side. I would also like to express my earnest gratitude to my supportive peers, who cleared my confusion and eased my anxiety. Lastly, my supervisor has a significant role in motivating and guiding me throughout my research. I am beyond grateful for his constructive feedback and guidance, which assisted me greatly in completing this thesis.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Governments worldwide are increasingly utilizing social media as a means to provide information, facilitate dialogue with citizens, and engage the public (Mergel, 2013). Among the various forms of content used on these platforms, memes have emerged as a particularly potent medium due to their humor, relatability, and viral nature (Anderson & Lee, 2020). While users of online social media platforms have readily embraced memes, and studies have been dedicated to investigating their motives and effectiveness (Leiser, 2022; Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021; Hu, 2023), the usage of memes by public administration and the effectiveness of this relatively novel strategy of social media usage remain understudied. Particularly, studies focusing on East Asian democracies are scarce. Recognizing the theoretical and practical importance of understanding the effectiveness of the government's usage of memes on social media, this paper aims to fill this gap by examining the use of memes by Taiwan's government ministries on Facebook and the effectiveness of this strategy on citizen reaction and engagement. This research is crucial as it informs how governments' social media usage can be optimized by employing memes with suitable humor types and styles. It also sheds light on memes' function in enhancing the government's likeability, community building, and public service delivery, opening up avenues for future researchers on memes' effectiveness in the government's strategy in political communication and social media usage.

Previous studies have extensively explored the role of social media in public administration, pointing out that social media can be used for information dissemination, self-representation, public service delivery, and fostering public engagement (Mergel, 2013; Bonsón et al., 2015; DePaula et al., 2018; Criado &

Villodre, 2020). Furthermore, studies have investigated the various forms of humor that reside in memes and the potential of memes as a communication strategy, demonstrating memes' potential and effectiveness in attracting attention and fostering communities (Ross & Rivers, 2017; Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). However, a knowledge gap persists concerning the impact of the governmental entities' usage of mems on citizen reaction and engagement. Addressing this gap, this study poses the following research question: How does the Taiwanese ministries' meme usage on social media affect citizen reaction and engagement?

To answer the proposed research question, this paper conducts a content analysis of the memes posted by Taiwan's ministries and the comments react to those memes. The research result of this paper contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence that memes have the potential to facilitate community building, the government's likeability, and public service delivery. However, higher meme usage does not necessarily correlate with more page followers, contradicting conventional assumptions. This paper suggests that while memes can enhance engagement through humor, other factors determine the audience sizes of the government's social media usage. Practically, this research offers valuable insights for the public administration into meme's effectiveness in engaging citizens and facilitating the government's favorable impression online. Meanwhile, this research contributes to the academic community through its research on memes' potential to lure citizens into developing a more positive perception and a more trusted relation with the government, making a step forward in the existing literature regarding social media usage.

The structure of this paper is as follows: a literature review on the government's social media usage and internet memes will be proposed, followed by a section of the theoretical framework. Then, this paper will proceed to a detailed methodology section, a section to present the research result, and a section to analyze the obtained result. Finally, the paper ends with a conclusion with a summary of the research and suggestions for future studies.

2. Theory

With the rise of social media and the public's rapid adoption of these platforms, public administration has shown a growing interest in utilizing social media as an additional communication channel with their constituents. The following section will delve into related studies on public administration's social media usage, citizens' reactions to these usages, and the circulation of political memes on social media. Although rich literature has been dedicated to illuminating the government's social media usage and the role of memes on the internet, there remains a research gap in the government's meme usage on social media and citizen reaction to it.

2.1 Social media communication between public administrations and citizens

Social media usage has greatly attracted popularity among the global population, and the public sector has begun to use social media to communicate with citizens and achieve goals set by institutions. Meanwhile, the public sector's expanding use of social media also attracts scholarly attention and wide discussion among the academic community regarding various strategies and forms of content selected by the public administration.

Conducting research on the U.S. federal government's social media usage, Mergel developed the widely referenced three-category framework regarding public administration's social media usage: push (one-direction information provision), pull (bi-direction interaction), and networking (co-design), which corresponds to the missions of transparency, participation, and collaboration, respectively (Mergel, 2013). In the research, Mergel discovered that the prominent reason behind the U.S.

federal government's use of social media is "to be where the people are," which allowed the government to "get the message out to the audiences that might not normally hear it (Mergel, 2013: 331)." Besides being present on available online channels to boost transparency, the government also found to use social media to increase citizen participation (Mergel, 2013). The government officials have realized social media's potential to facilitate bi-directional interaction with the public and receive citizens' inputs, while Mergel revealed that collaborative engagement between citizens and public administration is only identifiable in citizens' active interaction with government-created content but not vice versa (Mergel, 2013). Namely, the government placed more focus on passively listening and absorbing comments provided by citizens, making it more challenging to achieve more bi-directional interaction and "impossible for social media directors to systematically gage the impact they are making (Mergel, 2013: 331)."

Although Mergel discovered that many government officials are willing to remain passive when managing social media (Mergel, 2013), some scholars have discerned social media's potential for public service delivery (Criado & Villodre, 2020). Similar to service provision in the private sector, which utilizes social media to assist with flight booking, public administration can redirect social media users to governmental online pages and facilitate public service delivery in this way (Hofmann et al., 2013). Criado and Villodre's empirical study on various nations' local governments confirmed that social media has the potential to be used for public service delivery by public administration, despite that this category has not yet occupied the primary focus for the public sector (Criado & Villodre, 2020). In their paper, "public service delivery" is defined as public service transactions that happen through social media,

including services traditionally offered in conventional channels but now on social media and the co-production process (Criado & Villodre, 2020). More specifically, this category contains actions like seeking assistance or demanding improvements on topics related to public service, calls for action, or early warnings on vital events (Criado & Villodre, 2020). The result of the paper confirms Mergel's finding that information provision is the primary social media usage of public administrations, while simulating interaction comes in second (Criado & Villodre, 2020). Although public service delivery remains incidental in this regard, there may be unleashed patenting in this way of social media usage.

While Mergel, Criado, and Villodre think that social media usage can enhance transparency and facilitate public service delivery, DePaula, Dincellia, and Harrison expect that public administrations will strategically use social media for symbolic and presentation purposes (DePaula et al., 2018). Their paper showed that almost half of the messages published by public administrations on social media can be linked with self-representation, which implies the actors' deliberate intention to favorably shape their impression (DePaula et al., 2018). This type of strategic communication is expected to enhance the government's likeability, competency, and worthiness by exchanging symbolic acts like cultural references as the boundary between government and the public is increasingly blurry, and symbols are growing important in shaping organizational identity (van Riel & Balmer, 1997). Meanwhile, literature also pointed out that social media can assist in identity construction (Boyd & Ellison, 2007) and impression management (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012).

Wukish further classified the government's social media usage into one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many (Wukich, 2022). Confirming Mergel's research, one-to-many information dissemination remains the most widely used strategy for public administration (Wukich, 2022). Unlike one-to-many, one-to-one interaction focuses on bi-directional interactions that can be observed when the government actively seeks citizens' input or responds to those inputs (Mergel, 2013). Since one-to-one offers a more interactive dialogue between citizens and the government, it could provide valuable insights into public policies and trigger unconventional refinement based on online feedback (Reddick et al., 2017). Many-to-many occurs when the government engages in larger conversations to develop a more nuanced understanding of its stakeholders' perceptions and diffuse rumors when necessary (Mergel, 2017). Adopting a many-to-many strategy may also facilitate public administration's proactive approach to addressing public sentiments and clarifying rumors by intervening in the spread of inaccurate information (Mergel, 2017). Being able to effectively select the most appropriate communication modes is important for contemporary public administration to participate in digital discourse, where many of their constituents gather.

When the government uses social media platforms to disseminate information and facilitate interaction, social media empowers citizens by providing a channel to voice opinions on diverse issues and hold governments accountable (Driss et al., 2019). Hence, policymakers must engage in this newly emerged channel, especially when social media has ranked third among the public's preferred communicative channels (Bonsón et al., 2015). Being present on social media can be perceived as an action with transparency and accountability, and many governments have presented

themselves on social media platforms (Bonsón et al., 2015). Public engagement is necessary to achieve successful online community building, and Bonsón, Royo, and Ratkai's study has found that the most popular way of interaction on social media is pressing like, while sharing comes second and comments come last (Bonsón et al., 2015). The research also indicated that the government's strategy for managing social media may be somewhat different from the citizens' preferences (Bonsón et al., 2015). The most posted topics by the public administration are "cultural activities and sports" and "marketing/city promotion/tourism," while the citizens are more interested in topics related to local governance and will directly affect their daily lives (Bonsón et al., 2015). This research also unlinks a bigger audience with larger engagement levels, and great heterogeneity exists between different local governments (Bonsón et al., 2015). At last, the paper suggests that local governments should show a willingness to integrate citizens' feedback while "actively working on sending their stakeholders presumably interesting and relevant content in order to promote engagement (Bonsón et al., 2015)," and using memes for policy marketing and facilitate information dissemination may be an effective strategy for public administration and an interesting topic that worth more scholarly research.

2.2. The use of memes in social media communication

The contemporary definition of memes can be traced back to Richard Dawkins's book *The Selfish Gene*, which referred memes as "a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation (Dawkin, 1976: 142)." Being described as "artifacts of participatory digital culture (Ross & Rivers, 2017: 6)," internet memes have been widely used as a handful medium for disseminating ideas, and meme's flexibility and easiness in creating and remixing help to attract more online participants to use it to express

opinions on societal and political issues (Anderson & Lee, 2020).

Recognizing memes' great appeal to cultures and subcultures, various political actors increasingly use them for communication. Lin, Yi-Feng, Chang, Shu-Chen, and Niu, Tse-Hsun researched the impact of employing memes on policy marketing, discovering that using memes can lead to the audience's more favorable perception of the government, and only a small portion rated negatively on the usage of memes (Lin et al., 2023). Unsurprisingly, youth react most positively to memes, while seniors react more negatively (Lin et al., 2023). Although approximately one-third of the interviewees in the study agreed that the government would deliberately deploy memes to obscure important information about public policies, nearly half of the respondents agreed that memes assist in enhancing their impression of the message carried by memes (Lin et al., 2023).

Besides being a simple but effective way to spread the message to a targeted culture, memes also offer anonymity for authors, attract divisive actors for information operations, and give rise to grassroots movements (Davidson, 2012). Beskow, Kumar, and Carley (2020) observed that memes tend to receive fewer shares and likes during the U.S. election despite the meme's popularity. They speculated that this may attributed to users' avoidance of sharing controversial political memes and publicly endorsing them, although they claimed that memes spread through mutation and evolution rather than traditional likes and shares (Beskow et al., 2020). Additionally, they also pointed out that bots have no significant involvement in propagating political memes during elections (Beskow et al., 2020).

Some literature argues that memes can confirm or contest the existing political landscape and simulate discursive discussion in political conflicts, and this feature enables memes to facilitate community building (Segev et al., 2015). Thanks to the inherent humor elements, memes can (de)politicize or attract attention to and from political issues (Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021). Memes also lower the barrier to entering political discourse and appeal to more people due to their entertaining nature, and public administrations or organizations have tried to use this feature of memes to clarify misinformation (Leiser, 2022). Hu's thesis revealed that when compared to pure text, memes perform better in increasing the amicability of information sources and the willingness to share (Hu, 2023).

Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong studied the humorous styles within Internet memes, pointing out that the most common styles are affiliative and aggressive, while self-defeating can reach the widest spread (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). Continuing the above finding, Guan-Yin Lin studied how different humorous types (affiliative vs. aggressive) influence the effect of policy marketing on different policy types (less contentious vs. more contentious) (Lin, 2022). Through an analysis of 500 surveys, Guan-Yin Lin discovered that memes with affiliative humor achieve higher interest, positive attitudes, and shareability than aggressive humor (Lin, 2022). Moreover, Guan-Yin Lin revealed that affiliative humor performs better than aggressive humor regardless of the level of controversy surrounding the policy (Lin, 2022). More interestingly, Guan-Yin Lin revealed that the quality of contention is the most impactful factor in triggering the audience's interest in the policy and better persuasion effect (Lin, 2022). Humor elements of memes are just adornments with minor effects in persuading and interesting audiences (Lin, 2022). Participants of

Leiser's study also noted that memes oversimplify complex sociopolitical issues and may be manipulative to attract people seeking simple answers (Leiser, 2022), and the study also warned about the possibility of hollowing out public policy understanding (Lin, 2022).

Despite the humor embedded in memes has increased memes' online popularity and willingness to share, Mortensen and Neumayer discovered that the ability to correctly decipher the humor carried by memes strengthens a sense of belonging and establishes a clear boundary between "us" and "them (Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021)." Lin Jiu Jay's essay revealed that political memes are sometimes used as a form of political expression by viewers and reinforce partisanship. The reinforcement of partisanship is significant in the behavioral pattern of memes, as over half of the study respondents only shared political memes with people from the same party or similar political stance, and this pattern will be more prominent among the more loyal viewers of political memes (Lin, 2021).

Although there is a substantial body of literature on the government's strategy in social media usage and meme deployment, as well as on citizens' participation and possible drawbacks in online political discourse through memes, there remains a research gap in understanding how public administrations deliver messages through memes and the public's reaction on the contained humor elements. Furthermore, much research in the field focuses on cases in Europe or the United States, and an East Asian democracy remains understudied. Understanding the effectiveness of an Asia government's meme usage provides further understanding of meme's potential in

communication between government and the public, offering insights into the

government's communication strategies in the contemporary era, with attention

becoming more scarce and civic engagement becoming more important. With their

humor and viral nature, memes have the potential to become a useful tool for

governments to attract attention and initiate dialogue with the citizens, and the

ableness to elicit citizen engagement is an indispensable step for any further exercises.

3. Theoretical Framework

As previously mentioned, the use of memes by public administrations in the context of East Asian democracies is a relatively unexplored area of research. While there is a dearth of specific theoretical frameworks for this topic, the existing body of knowledge on social media usage can provide valuable insights for categorizing and formulating theoretical expectations. Memes, with their inherent humor, are primarily used by public administrations to disseminate information, thereby broadening their reach to audiences who were previously less engaged with government outreach efforts. Hence, this paper takes advantage of previous research to categorize humor into four distinct humor styles and seven humor types. Based on previous research on public administration, this paper also seeks to categorize citizen reactions and engagement to government-published memes. Since memes attract more attention and tend to elicit amusement, this paper expects memes to facilitate community building and public service while enhancing the government's likeability.

3.1 Information Provision

Memes have been widely utilized for the dissemination of information and ideas due to their ease of creation and rapid spread (Anderson & Lee, 2020). Public administration has employed memes to disseminate information regarding public policies or other less politicized matters related to the government (Hu, 2023). In 2019, a Taiwanese government official proposed the use of memes as a medium for disseminating policy information or debunking rumors (Hu, 2023). Attempting to transform the traditionally dull governmental message, the Taiwanese government now uses memes to decrease the citizens' burden of digesting governmental messages

and make the sent message sharable and interesting (Hu, 2023). The humor that

resides in memes brings viewers entertainment and relaxedness, and those feelings

will increase the viewer's willingness to accept and share the message sent out by the

public administration (Leiser, 2022). Humor in memes can involve people with

serious or contentious topics in a more casual manner since consuming memes is

usually associated with a fun and joyful experience, which the conventional format of

public administration's message failed to achieve (Leiser, 2022). Humor in memes

also helps mitigate the backlash that public policy-related content may elicit by

downplaying the perceived aggressive viewpoint, even though memes usually fail to

carry complex issues and often oversimplify the matters (Leiser, 2022). The catchy

design of memes attracts more attention, and the memes also lower the barrier to

digesting the message for the viewers through visualizing the messages they carry

(Hu, 2023). From here, one can see that the motive of the public administration's

employment of memes is to improve the government's effectiveness in delivering the

message. Using memes is essentially regarded as an improved strategy to fulfill the

government's mission of information provision.

This dimension of meme public administration can be categorized through Mergel's

notion of information provision (Mergel, 2013)." This notion indicates the process of

pushing information to the public and enlarging the reached audiences. Here, memes

can be seen as an upgrade on the existing public administration's push strategies

(Mergel, 2013). Memes help make the existing information provision governmental

initiatives more appealing, attracting more people to view and share the sent message

(Leiser, 2022). As the visualization and humor equipped by memes decrease the

barrier and unwillingness to receive messages from the government, memes help the

public administration reach a broader audience that may not be reached

conventionally (Hu, 2023).

Humor

Humor is mostly subjective, and its main purpose is to amuse, raise laughter, and

promote positive sentiment (Reyes et al., 2012). To produce humor, one has to mix

two disparate concepts or situations unexpectedly and unconventionally (Lefcourt &

Martin, 1986). The humor delivery process starts with the sender, who deliberately

selects a particular humor style (Martin et al., 2003) and creates a meme of a certain

humor type (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). The sender will then distribute the created

meme through social media or other channels, transmitting the memes to the receivers

that decode the message (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). After receiving

the memes, the receiver can respond to them by liking them, commenting on them, or

sharing them (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015).

There are four distinct humor styles: self-enhancing, affiliative, self-defeating, and

aggressive (Martin et al., 2003). Self-enhancing humor adopts a humorous outlook on

life, even when facing adversity, and aims to amuse the viewers with incongruities

(Martin et al., 2003). Affiliative humor focuses on displaying wittiness and fun to

amuse others while facilitating relationships, which is very different from aggressive

humor (Martin et al., 2003). Although aggressive humor is also a form of humor, it is

less concerned about others and elicits humor through content that is likely to hurt or

make fun of others (Martin et al., 2003). Aggressive humor may also not necessarily

aim to hurt others; it could also be a mere negative description of a certain scenario

that involves inappropriate behaviors (Martin et al., 2003). Self-defeating humor expresses aggressiveness toward themselves, amusing others through disparaging things at their own expense (Martin et al., 2003).

The success of humor and memes relies on humor styles and the humor types deployed. There are seven distinct types of humor types: comparison, personification, exaggeration, pun, sarcasm, silliness, and surprise (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). The name of the seven humor types is self-explanatory. Comparison implies combining elements to create humor or a humorous situation; personification refers to personifying inhuman objects (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). Exaggeration means the act of overstating or magnifying to an unreal extent for humor; the pun is the witty use of linguistic elements (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). Sarcasm is close to the notion of irony, while silliness creates humor through absurd expression; the surprise mostly originates from unexpected situations (Catanescu & Tom, 2001).

3.2 Self-Representation

Since memes can decrease viewers' critical thinking about the message and the source of information while stimulating a more positive attitude in the ones who publish them (Hu, 2023), memes can be a useful instrument for the public administration that wishes to conduct self-representation. The public administration may employ memes to show its humor and understanding of the current trend, deliberately creating the impression that the government is closer to the citizens. Memes can also provide amusement to the viewers, facilitating viewers' favorable perception of the public administration that uses memes (Lin et al., 2023). The shortness and tendency to

simplify issues and memes can also be used to highlight content that favors the government while downplaying the less positive information (Lin et al., 2023). Hence, the public administration may use memes for symbolic and presentation purposes, increasing their likeability and receiving more applause from citizens.

This dimension of meme usage by public administration can be categorized through the notion of self-representation, which suggests that the actors deliberately manage and influence their impression (DePaula et al., 2018). Here, memes can be seen as a tool of strategic communication for enhancing the public administration's likeability and a symbol for shaping favorable organizational identity (van Riel & Balmer, 1997). Memes help the government to shape an image of a humorous and trendy government that is close to the general public, and through this way, the government can give its constituents a good impression. Regarding this dimension, this paper expects that the citizens will react to the memes with complement. Either compliment the government or compliment the editors who are responsible for creating and publishing those memes on social media. Those compliments suggest that the government has enhanced its likeability among the citizens.

3.3 Citizen Reaction and Engagement

When the government uses social media to disseminate information and enhance interaction with the citizens, the citizens also seize social media as an empowering opportunity to offer opinions directly and hold the government accountable (Driss et al., 2019). Recently, citizens have displayed a growing fondness for communicating with the government via social media (Bonsón et al., 2015). Hence, the online

comment section beneath the governmental social media posts becomes an important observational place to explore the dynamics of citizen-government interactions.

The comment section is expected to be the main channel for citizens to voice opinions and interact with the government and the memes they publish on social media (Driss et al., 2019). Citizens' feedback presented in the comment section can be diverse, potentially containing comments that play the jokes along with the posted memes, agreeing with the sent message, disagreeing with the sent message, suggesting the governments, community building, or even responses with little relation to the memes and the message carried by them. The comments may also include compliments on the government or the editors managing the posted memes, which have been discussed previously under the category of self-representation.

Public service delivery and co-production

As discussed above, citizens who were previously excluded from government communication channels may use the comment section to interact with the government after being reached by memes. This interaction may then contain the potential for public service delivery or co-production. The comment section of social media platforms offers a more accessible channel for citizens to communicate with governmental departments, including demanding information regarding public service or offering suggestions on public service delivery. This accessibility is particularly relevant given the prevalence of social media, which has been ranked third among the public's preferred communicative channels (Bonsón et al., 2015). Although this may not be directly related to the posted memes, the attention memes help attract and

facilitate public service delivery since the citizens can request information and provide suggestions regarding public service delivery in the comment section. Citizens' feedback can help public administrations improve existing services, facilitating a beneficial co-production process.

This dimension of the study can be categorized through the notion of public service delivery. In their study, Criado and Villodre categorized public service delivery as transforming part of the traditional offline transaction and co-production process regarding public service onto social media (Criado & Villodre, 2020). This can include actions like seeking assistance, demanding improvements on public service issues, calls for action, and early warnings on critical events (Criado & Villodre, 2020). Here, the comment section below the posted memes serves as a helpful observational place for the public administration to hear feedback and answer questions regarding public service. The comment section also enables co-production processes like absorbing advice on public service delivery.

<u>Community building</u>

Leiser's research has shown that one of the core motives for using internet memes is social identity (Leiser, 2022), as correctly deciphering the humor in the memes helps bond people and differentiate between the in-group and out-group (Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021). Engaging with memes helps the participants develop and share a common understanding of the given situations or issues, turning memes into criteria for determining whether the person is from the same social group (Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021). Hence, citizens in the comment section below the posted memes

will show their ability to decipher the humor and play along with it, proving that they are part of the community and thereby fostering the process of community building. Citizens may also share relevant information or personal experiences to integrate into the community and bond with others. Additionally, research also shows that the behavioral pattern of meme-sharing confirms or even reinforces one's established political viewpoint (Lin, 2021), and this tendency can further enhance memes' function of community building. This characteristic of community building may also cause the comment section to have more agreeing than disagreeing voices, creating a space like an echo chamber.

Memes can assist the public administration's mission of information provision and improve its impression to the public, corresponding to the notion of information provision and self-representation (Mergel, 2013; DePaula et al., 2018). Therefore, this paper expects the comment section below the government-published memes to have more agreeing than disagreeing voices, and there will be compliments toward the government and the editors who create memes. This paper also expects that memes' function of community building will be embodied through the senders and receivers of memes sharing jokes and relevant experiences while others also attracted by memes will utilize this communicative channel to request information or provide suggestions to the government, which may improve public service delivery and co-production process (Criado & Villodre, 2020). Meanwhile, this paper also has no intention of excluding the potential occurrence of disagreeing voices, including resentment toward the government and disagreement on the sent message. By discussing and integrating these dimensions of meme usage, this study is able to demonstrate the public administration's strategy for posting memes on social media.

4. Methodology

Taiwan has faced challenges with disinformation, motivating the country's executive branch to use more heavily on social media accounts to clarify rumors, promote policies, and engage citizens. Later, the government launched the "meme project," which uses humorous memes to disseminate government messages, further exemplifying Taiwan's innovative approach to digital communication. Taiwan's public administrations' embracement of memes in online government-public dialogues has made it an interesting case to study government-posted memes' effect on civic engagement and reaction. The following section provides a more detailed description of this paper's research design, including explanations of case selection, sample selection, and coding strategies.

4.1 Case Selection

Although Taiwan has long suffered from disinformation due to external threats from China, the issue of circulating disinformation and fake news only landed on the top of the agenda when Lai Ching-te began to lead the executive branch in 2018 (Liu, 2021). Witnessing the rumor accelerated due to the upcoming elections and referendum, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the Taiwanese political party that Lai served for, outlined a clear communication strategy for public administration in 2018 (Liu, 2021). Under this strategy, the government became more vigilant about social media posts, correcting the rumors and reassuring the policy stances (Liu, 2021). This strategy also helped to enhance communication between citizens and governments (Liu, 2021).

The public sector's engagement in social media was more active after the 2020

presidential election and the COVID-19 pandemic (Liu, 2021). Social media was

utilized as a pivotal instrument for combating misinformation and policymaking (Hu,

2023). Most governmental departments established official pages on Facebook, which

has since become the primary platform for Taiwanese public administration (Sung,

2020). The government's strategy in social media usage has received impressive

outcomes, as the number of responses to the pages created by the public

administration has surged from 1.61 million in 2019 to 4.3 million in 2020, showing

citizens' active engagement (Sung, 2020). Although this sharp increase can be

attributed to the public's increased interaction with health-related departments for

information during the pandemic, this also proved the effectiveness of the

government's innovative communication strategies on social media (Sung, 2020).

The competitive nature of social media has motivated the public sector to adopt eye-

catching tactics to gain attention (Liu, 2021). The government facilitated the "meme

project" by using humor memes to accelerate the spread of the government's

messages (Hu, 2023). This project promoted the shareability of government-posted

messages and encouraged each of Taiwan's governmental departments to use memes

more for facilitating government-public communication (Hu, 2023). Taiwan's public

sector's active embrace of meme usage for policy marketing and promoting civic

engagement has made Taiwan a particularly interesting case for researching meme's

effectiveness in promoting the government's messages and the public's reaction to

this strategy.

4.2 Sample Selection

This paper selected Facebook as the primary objective due to its widespread use among Taiwan's public sectors. Taiwan's governmental departments use Facebook more than other online platforms like YouTube, Twitter, Plurk, or Blog (Sung, 2020). Although YouTube ranked second in prevalence among Taiwan's public administrations, the engagement rate on YouTube is less than on Facebook, and most of the content will be published on Facebook rather than YouTube (Sung, 2020). The government's strategies for managing social media are mostly built around Facebook instead of other less used and less engaging online platforms (Sung, 2020). Hence, Facebook becomes an optimal source for researching Taiwan's public administration's meme usage and civic reaction toward this strategy as government-public interactions mostly happen on Facebook thanks to its wide communicative effect and the government's extensive and strategic use of it.

This paper places the research objective on the national level rather than the local level to encompass a broader understanding of the effectiveness of public administration social media usage, particularly meme usage, on the public. Although research on the local level often acquires a more nuanced understanding of the situation, this paper desires to provide a more comprehensive perspective regarding digital governance practices. Focusing on the national level allows this paper to probe over patterns and trends that may be less identifiable when researching locally, which is more segmented.

Moreover, this paper has selected every ministry subordinate to the Executive Yuan, the Taiwanese executive branch on the central level. Although councils, commissions,

and other departments are on the same administrative level as the ministries, they are not included in this paper's research focus since they focus on serving specific groups of people or only provide services related to particular issues. For example, the Veterans Affairs Council and Transitional Justice Commission only consider affairs affiliated with a very specific group of people or matters (Executive Yuan, n.d.). Since this paper wishes to adopt a broader perspective, it will only research ministries as they relate more closely to the public. A more specific explanation of this paper's sample is shown in Figure 1. Noticeably, the Ministry of Justice does not have an official page on Facebook.

Figure 1: Tawain's Ministries and their Facebook Pages

Figure 1		
Name of the Ministry	Function of the Ministry	Translation of its Facebook page name
Ministry of the Interior	Home Affairs, Household Affairs, Lands, Cooperation and People's Organizations, Police, Construction, Fire Services, Military Services, Immigration and Emigration, Architectural Studies, Police Education and Air	Ministry of the Interior

	Services	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Handling affairs between our country and other countries, protecting nationals abroad, and pursuing and defending the supreme interests of the nation in the international arena.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ROC（Taiwan）
Ministry of National Defense	National defense affairs and the army to safeguard the country's territorial sovereignty and ensure the safety of people's lives and properties.	Spokesperson of Ministry of National Defense
Ministry of Finance	Raising funds for government and levying taxes.	Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China
Ministry of Education	Educational Affairs and Teacher training.	Ministry of Education
Ministry of Economic Affairs	Promoting national economic policy	Ministry of Economic Affairs
Ministry of Health and Welfare	Social welfare and public health	Ministry of Health and Welfare
Ministry of Culture	Arts, publication, and	Ministry of Culture

	culture	
Ministry of Digital Affairs	Promoting innovation in the country's digital policies	Ministry of Digital Affairs
Ministry of Environment	Environmental Protection	Ministry of Environment
Ministry of Transportation and Communication	Transportation, weather forecast, postal service, and harbor management.	Ministry of Transportation and Communication, ROC.
Ministry of Labor	Labor union organization, labor relations, labor conditions, labor welfare and education, labor safety and health, and labor inspection.	Ministry of Labor
Ministry of Agriculture	The administration of the nation's agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and animal husbandry industries.	Ministry of Agriculture

(Source: Executive Yuan, n.d.)

4.3 Data Collection

The data is collected from the official Facebook pages of each studied ministry from the first day of 2024 to the last day of March, and this period is deliberately selected

for its novelty and exclusion from emergencies. Emergency communication is unquestionably an important research topic for scholars studying public administrations, yet emergency communication has reached beyond this paper's research scope. Hence, this paper's selected time has luckily not experienced any serious national tragedy, enabling this paper to focus on government-public online communications during ordinary times and decrease the turbulences from external factors.

This paper's raw data is collected from the comment sections of the memes published on ministries' Facebook pages and then filtered through the Facebook algorithm of "the most relevant comments." According to Meta, the company operates Facebook, comments that are made by one's friends, coming from verified profiles or pages, or comments received most responses will be more likely to be deemed as "the most relevant comments" by the applied algorithm (Facebook, n.d.-a). Thanks to Facebook's default setting, the "most relevant comments" will automatically appear on the top for every Facebook user (Facebook, n.d.-b). Facebook claimed that this setting made the users more likely to be exposed to high-quality and more relevant comments (Facebook, n.d.-a). As "the most relevant comments" is the default Facebook setting and has been applied to every user except those who manually turn off comment ranking, this paper decides to use the same strategy to select comments (Facebook, n.d.-b). The drawbacks of applying "the most relevant comments" as filter criteria will be further explained in the later section dedicated to discussing the research limitations of this paper.

After applying the "most relevant comments," this paper will select the top 5 comments out of all the shown ones. Those five comments will then be manually coded and analyzed, and the coding strategy applied here will be clarified later. Noticeably, this paper only analyzed memes, meaning that not all posts published on the studied Facebook will be included in this paper's research scope. This paper is dedicated to analyzing memes' embedded humor and citizen reaction to Taiwan's public administration's meme usage.

4.4 Operationalization of Variables and Analytical Strategy

This paper's research variables are citizen reactions and memes, which can be researched by coding humor and comments on social media, respectively. Four humor styles and seven humor types will be coded according to the coding strategies explained in the following paragraphs. Comments below the government-published memes embodied citizen reaction and engagement toward the government's social media usage of memes, and those comments will also be coded based on the framework developed in the section of theoretical framework.

Continuing the discussion on humor that has previously been presented in this paper's theoretical framework, this paper develops coding strategies for four distinct humor styles. Figure 2 outlines four distinct styles of humor, providing descriptions and corresponding coding guidelines. This paper's categorization and coding strategies are highly influenced by the framework developed in Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong's paper (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). However, this paper adds portraits of situations or incidents into the framework since the incidents

displayed in the government-published memes may occupy more focus than the characters involved, as the main functions of those memes are rumor clarification and policy marketing.

In this paper's coding strategies, affiliative humor is coded as a positive and non-first-person narrative on characters or incidents since this type of humor involves using wit to entertain others and foster positive interaction (Martin et al., 2003). Since Self-enhancing humor adopts a humorous outlook and entertains viewers with incongruities (Martin et al., 2003), this type of humor is coded as portraying the incident or the characters positively in a first-person narrative. The coding guideline for aggressive humor is to portray the incident or the characters with mockery in a non-first-person narrative, and this mockery can be deliberative or without malicious intention but to elicit humor (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). Self-defeating humor is identifiable when the memes depict the incident or the characters with mockery in a first-person narrative. Figure 2, attached below, shows the description of and coding strategies for all four humor styles.

Figure 2: Coding Strategies for Four Humor Styles

Figure 2		
Humor Style	Description	Coding Guideline
Affiliative	Displaying wittiness and fun to amuse others while facilitating relationships.	Portrait the incident or the characters positively in a non-first-person narrative.

Self-enhancing	Adopts a humorous outlook on life, even when facing adversity, and aims to amuse the viewers with incongruities.	Portrait the incident or the characters positively in a first-person narrative.
Aggressive	Elicits humor through mockery that is likely to hurt others' feelings with or without malice.	Portrait the incident or the characters with mockery in a non-first-person narrative.
Self-Defeating	Expresses aggressiveness toward themselves, amusing others by mocking themselves or disparaging things at their own expense	Portrait the incident or the characters with mockery in a first-person narrative.

The efficacy of humor depends on successful cooperation between the humor styles and humor types. As discussed in the theoretical framework, there are seven distinct types of humor types: comparison, personification, exaggeration, pun, sarcasm, silliness, and surprise (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). The names of the seven humor types are self-explanatory, and their coding strategies are closely followed by their names.

Comparison implies combining elements to elicit humor, and the coding strategy for this humor type is then detect if the memes' humor is triggered by comparison

(Catanescu & Tom, 2001). Personification means equipping non-human objects with human characteristics, and the coding strategy for this humor style is then to detect if the memes' humor is triggered by personification (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). Exaggeration is identifiable when the memes overstate or magnify subjects for humor, and the coding strategy is then to detect if the humor corresponds to exaggeration (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). A meme will be coded as a pun when the meme contains witty use of linguistic elements, and memes coded as sarcasm should include identifiable irony (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). Silliness creates humor through creating absurdity and incongruity, while surprise arises from unexpected situations, and coding strategies of these two will be developed according to their nature. The coding strategies of all seven humor types are sorted in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Coding Strategies for Seven Humor Types

Figure 3		
Humor Type	Description	Coding Strategy
Comparison	Put two or more elements together to create humor.	The meme's humor originates from the comparison of the displayed elements.
Personification	Attribute human features or emotions to non-human objects.	The meme's humor originates from the employed personification.
Exaggeration	Magnify the emotions or specific characteristics.	The meme's humor originates from

		overstating the emotions or other elements.
Pun	Humorous usage of the language to mimic similar sounds and create new meanings.	Uncommon or witty use of the language.
Sarcasm	Display obvious irony.	Exhibition or statement regarding obvious sarcasm.
Silliness	Making fun of obvious absurdity or incongruity.	The meme's humor arises from the silly elements.
Surprise	Unexpected situation or plot development.	The meme contains a surprising plot or elements.

This paper also focuses on the ministry-published meme receivers, who are the citizens of the country. Those receivers express their opinion online by leaving comments under the memes posted by the ministries, and this paper analyzes by coding those comments to gain insights into the effectiveness of ministries' meme usage and citizen reaction toward this innovative strategy. The coding strategy for the comments will divide comments into ten categories: complimenting the government, complementing the editors who create memes, agreeing with the sent message, disagreeing with the sent message, resentment on unrelated issues, self-expression, sharing relevant information, playing the jokes, suggesting government, asking information from government. These ten categories correspond to the theoretical

expectations formulated in the theoretical framework, and the coding strategy for coding comments is elaborated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Coding Strategy for comments

Figure 4			
Comment type	Description	Coding strategy	Example
Complimenting government	The comments complement the government or show public trust in the government.	The commenter admires the government's efforts or policy stances.	It's really reassuring to have a government that can do its job. Thank you for your hard work 👏 ❤️ 🙏
Complimenting editors	The comments complement the memes or editors that create the memes.	The commenter admires the memes or editors' creativity and great sense of humor.	Thank you for making such a nice illustration, it's very helpful to students and teachers!
Agreeing with the sent message	The comments agree with the message carried by the meme.	The commenter expressed agreement on the message carried by the meme.	Shout out to the Habitat Conservation
Disagreeing with	The comments	The commenter	This measure will

the sent message	disagree with the message carried by the meme.	expressed disagreement on the message carried by the meme.	not lead to reduced housing price
Resentment on unrelated issues	The comments show resentment on issues unrelated to the message carried by memes.	The commenter is resentful of things unrelated to the posted memes.	Can the Minister of Education step down if he can't even show basic respect? Keeps interrupting during the interpellation and shows no politeness. Ah, isn't respecting others something that will be taught in kindergarten?
Self-expression	The comments share experiences or thoughts that are weakly related to the memes.	The commenter shares his or her opinion or experiences that are weakly related to memes.	What we want to leave to our children is virtue, not money.
Sharing relevant	The comments	The commenter	As a parent, it is a

experiences	share experiences related to the memes.	shares his or her opinion or experiences that are related to memes.	precious experience with a son who will go to Dongyin.
Play the joke	The comments identify the joke in the meme and play along with it.	The commenter plays the joke together with the meme or show ability to identify or echo with the memes.	I won't forget! I won't forget because I didn't win the lottery.
Suggesting government	The comments suggest the government regarding public policies.	The commenter provides suggestions for the government to improve public service delivery.	Thank you for the government's quick response to the rumors about the lean pork protein 🙏 Can you provide download points for the government's hard-worked short videos, so that people who want

			to forward them, so the people want to spread the videos, can get them quickly? Thank you.
Asking for information from the government	The comments ask for information regarding public policies from the government.	The commenter asks questions regarding public policies to the government.	Is it necessary to report tax after being jobless for two years?

4.5 Research Limitations

This paper's research design is subject to some potential drawbacks. One is the subjectivity inherent in qualitative methodology, which "recognizes that the subjectivity of the researcher is intimately involved in scientific research (Ratner 2002: 1)." This subjectivity may interfere in designing coding strategies and interpretation of the data, as they will both reflect this paper's perspective that may slightly deviate from others.

A more significant drawback of this paper is its application of Facebook's "the most relevant comments" algorithm when selecting the most pertinent comments. This algorithm is largely based on the algorithm and personalization, which is derived from users' viewing habits (Facebook, n.d.-a). Namely, this algorithm will not always push the most engaging comments onto the top, and the top comments are shown

differently for different viewers (Facebook, n.d.-a). Moreover, some posts in the

gathered data have less than five "the most relevant comments," further limiting the

data this paper can acquire. Recognizing the drawback of Facebook's algorithm, this

paper has attempted to select comments according to the number of likes they have

received. However, most comments received a diminutive number of likes, rendering

the distinction between posts insignificant and nullifying the effectiveness of this

selection method. Hence, this paper still selects the comments based on "the most

relevant comments" and declares this research limitation here.

5. Result

Social media now plays a crucial role in the Taiwan government's strategies of policy marketing and engaging citizens, and memes have become a novel and potentially effective tool for the government to disseminate information and interact with citizens humorously and engagingly. The subsequent sections examined the relationship between meme usage and the number of followers on Facebook and the frequency and effect of different humor styles and types. To obtain a more nuanced understanding of citizens' responses to government-published memes, the following sections also investigate the frequency of each comment type.

5.1 Number of Followers and Meme Usage

Given memes' ability to quickly spread and attract attention, many may expect that higher meme usage will lead to larger numbers of followers. However, the correlation between meme usage and the number of followers is not positive. Figure 5 shows that the Ministry of Health and Welfare has a significantly larger base of audiences than other ministries, while it only used one meme in the studied period. Meme only occupies around 1% of the Ministry of Health and Welfare's total posts, yet it successfully attracts more followers than other ministries. Ministry of National Defense, which ranked second in the number of followers among all studied ministries, only uses two memes, and the percentage of memes is around 2%. On the other hand, the ministry that uses the most memes is the Ministry of Interior, which has more than one-third of the total posts that are memes. However, this ministry ranked bottom in terms of the number of followers. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance's percentage meme usage is 33% and 26%, respectively. Yet, they

all rank after the Ministry of Agriculture, which used zero memes in the studied period. Consequently, Figures 5 and 6 suggest that more employment of memes does not necessarily mean more citizens will follow the pages created by the ministries, meaning that a higher meme usage may not assist in attracting more citizens. However, this does not imply that memes have no role in engaging citizens. It just shows that memes may not strongly correlate to the number of followers, and other factors may influence more on the number of followers for each ministry's Facebook page. The great difference between each ministry's meme usage showcases that not every Taiwanese ministry adopts the innovative social media strategy of posing memes. Some embrace the memes more, and some are more reluctant to use them. This suggests that each ministry may have different strategies for managing social media and interacting with citizens.

Figure 5: Meme Usage of the ministries

■ Total posts in the time span   ■ Meme

Ministry	Total posts in the time span	Meme
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE	158	0
MINISTRY OF LABOR	46	0
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION…	97	0
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT	80	1
MINISTRY OF DIGITAL AFFAIRS	39	1
MINISTRY OF CULTURE	85	5
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELFARE	73	1
MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS	57	1
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	21	7
MINISTRY OF FINANCE OF…	27	7
SPOKESPERSON OF MINISTRY OF…	98	2
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,…	77	1
MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR	22	8

Figure 6: Number of Follower of the Ministries

Ministry	Followers
Ministry of Digital Affairs	15000
Ministry of Transportation and…	107000
Ministry of Environment	118000
Ministry of Finance	152000
Ministry of the Interior	217000
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	273000
Ministry of Labor	279000
Ministry of Education	287000
Ministry of Culture	300000
Ministry of Economic Affairs	349000
Ministry of Agriculture	363000
Ministry of National Defense	413000
Ministry of Health and Welfare	1500000

5.2 Employment of Different Humor Styles and Types

With their inherent humor, memes serve as effective tools for information dissemination and attention-grabbing. Humor, being the core element of a successful meme, plays a crucial role in audience engagement. This paper, therefore, delves into the effects of different humor styles and types, which have been thoroughly discussed and categorized in the previous sections. By presenting the frequency of each humor style and type, this paper aims to shed light on their influence on citizen engagement and reaction.

Employment of Different Humor Styles

Figure 7 reveals the frequency of each humor style's employment, suggesting that sarcasm is the most used type, with affiliative ranking second. However, there are no significant differences between the usage frequency of affiliative and aggressive styles. Although affiliative and aggressive styles have distinct approaches to eliciting humor, as one emphasizes positive wit and another emphasizes mockery, the

commonality of the two is their non-first-person narrative. Hence, this paper's research shows that Taiwan's ministries have a strong habit or preference for creating memes with non-first-person narratives. Compared to non-first-person narratives, first-person narrative is less used, and self-enhancing style is used noticeably less than aggressive and affiliative styles.

Figure 7: Employment of the Humor Styles

A bar chart titled "Figure 7: Employment of the Humor Styles" with a vertical axis ranging from 0 to 14. The bars are: Aggressive = 13, Affiliative = 12, Self-defeating = 7, Self-enhancing = 2.
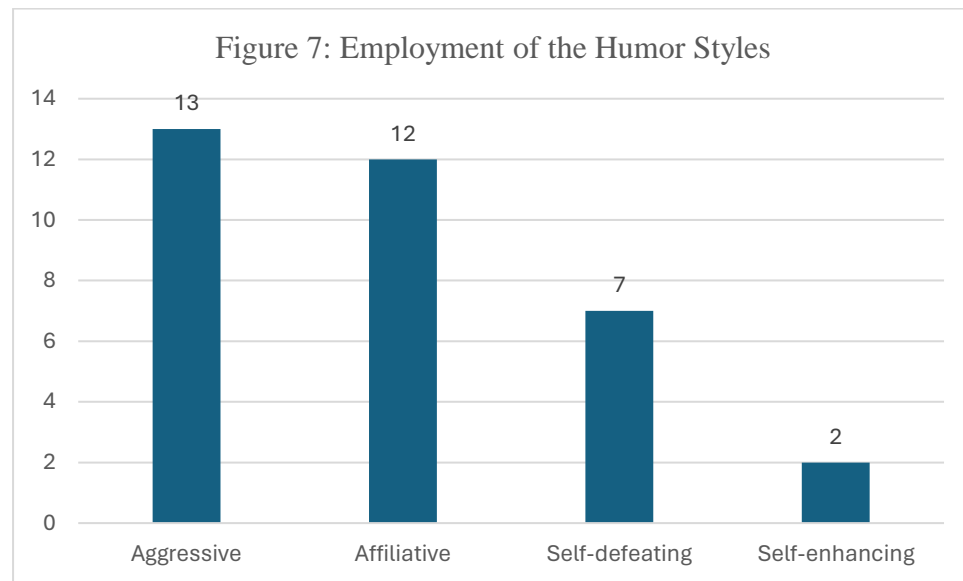
Figure 8 reveals citizens' reactions to each humor style, and this paper quantifies citizens' reactions into the number of likes, comments, and shares. The humor style that receives the most likes is affiliative, with self-defeating ranking second closely. However, the most used humor style of Taiwan's ministries is aggressive rather than affiliative or self-defeating, unlinking the most liked styles with the most used styles.

The humor style that receives the most comments is affiliative, with aggressive ranking the second. Although self-enhancing does not receive the least likes and comments, this style receives zero share. This surprising zero can be attributed to the scarce samples of memes categorized as self-enhancing, as there are only two posts categorized as self-enhancing and both receive no share. The effectiveness of the self-

enhancing style, specifically its ability to attract comments, can be better measured if further research can acquire more relevant data.

Figure 8: Citizen Reaction on the Humor Styles

Legend: Affiliative, Aggressive, Self-defeating, Self-enhancing

AVERAGE LIKE: 956.55, 840.5, 951.71, 621
AVERAGE COMMENT: 88.27, 57, 37.86, 54.5
AVERAGE SHARE: 91.18, 59.57, 57, 0
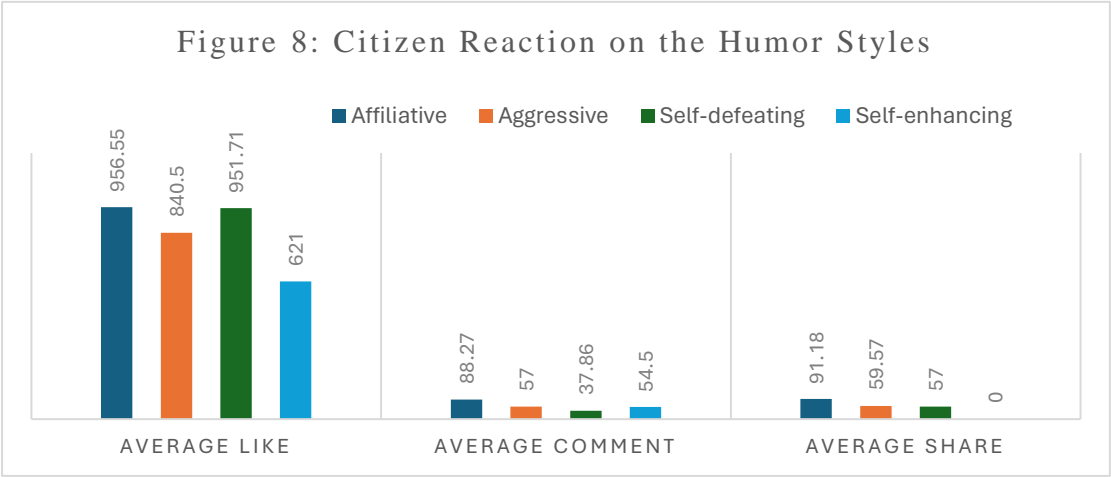
Employment of different Humor Types

Figure 9 reveals the frequency of each humor type's employment, suggesting that sarcasm is the most used type, with personification ranking second. However, there are no significant differences between the rest. Comparison, exaggeration, pun, and surprise have the same usage frequency, potentially suggesting that there is no clear preference for Taiwan's ministries in employing those five humor types. This may suggest that Taiwan's ministries have not yet developed a strong habit or preference for using certain humor types. The discussion of Taiwan's ministries' social media usage, particularly meme usage, will be elaborated in the section dedicated to analysis.

Figure 9: Employment of the Humor Types
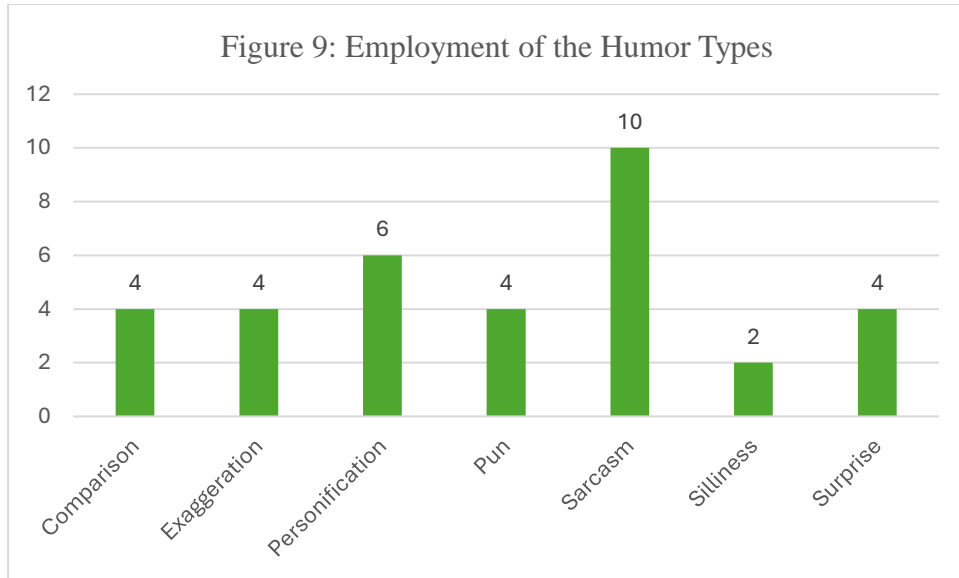
Figure 10 reveals citizens' reactions to each humor type, and this paper quantifies citizens' reactions into the number of likes, comments, and shares. The humor type that receives the most likes is exaggeration, with sarcasm ranking second. Interestingly, Taiwan ministries used sarcasm most frequently, with exaggeration ranking third in the usage frequency. Here, one can see that the most used humor type may not necessarily be the one that receives the most likes, suggesting a potential gap between citizens' viewing preferences and ministries' strategies for social media usage.

The humor types that received the most comments and shares are exaggeration and puns. Interestingly, puns did not receive the most likes, showing that citizen reactions may vary. Namely, likes, comments, and shares may not happen spontaneously but depend on citizens' choices. Moreover, Figure 10 also reveals that citizens prefer pressing likes more than posting comments and sharing memes. The number of average likes is significantly higher than the average amount of comments and shares,

with shares acquired ranking the lowest in numbers. This discovery suggests that citizens prefer pressing likes over commenting or sharing when interacting with the memes posted by Taiwan's ministries.

Figure 10: Citizen Reaction on the Humor types
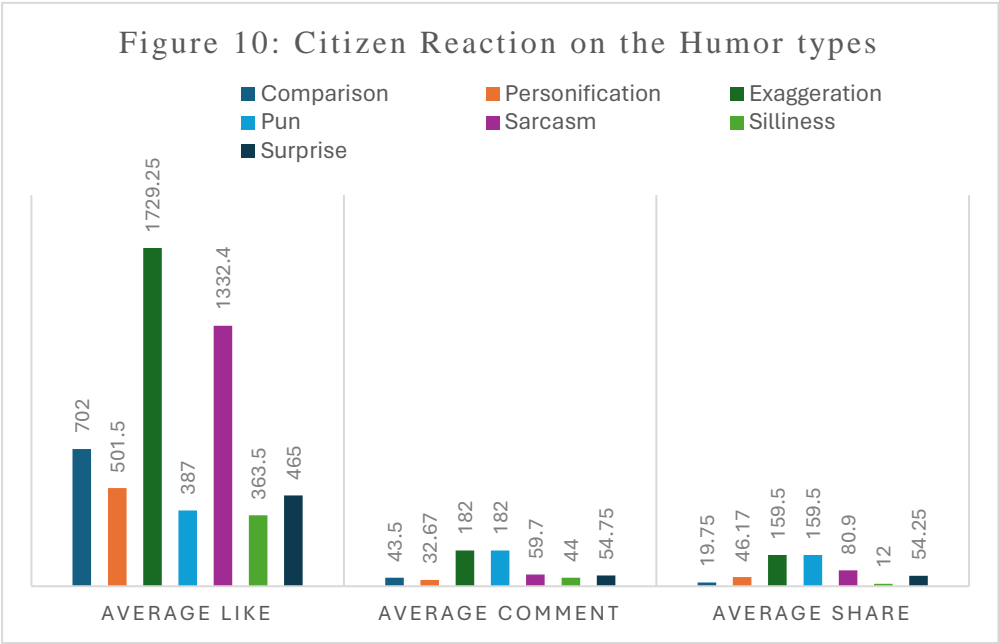
5.3 Bot Comment

Some irregular comments alert this paper to the potential occurrence of bot comments, which may not be generated by humans but by robots. The suspected bot comments do not occupy a large share of collected data, and they are generally identifiable. Since bot comments are generated by bots rather than humans, their logic is often incongruent and chaotic. Besides the cluttered logic, the wording of those bot comments frequently deviates from the Taiwanese's habit and shows little relation to the post they are commenting on, making them more noticeable. Moreover, those comments are noticeably longer and denser than other human-generated comments, usually containing a few words. Although some human-generated responses are

longer, those comments usually display some relation to the posted memes and will not involve too much conspiracy, especially conspiracy regarding politics.

Unlike human-generated comments, suspected bot comments usually dedicate long paragraphs to expressing their grievances towards governments or politicians. These bot comments accuse government officials of being corrupt or accuse the government of oppressing them and deliberately silencing them with possessed political power. In most cases, the content of those bot comments is completely unrelated to the posted memes. Hence, the content of those suspected bot comments will not be analyzed as they often have chaotic logic that cannot be rationally comprehended. Meanwhile, this paper discovers that the bot comments mostly occur when the post receives very little attention or lacks lively discussion, making the bot comments appear in the "most relevant comments" as there are no other comments to show. Bot comments are less likely to appear in posts with a livelier discussion in the comment sections, possibly because there are enough high-quality human comments to squeeze out the bot comments.

5.4 Comment

This paper researches how Taiwan's ministries deliver messages in memes and how citizens react to this novel strategy in the government's social media usage. Previously, this paper quantified citizens' reactions to the number of likes, comments, and shares. This paper wants to take a step forward by conducting a content analysis of the collected comments to acquire a more nuanced understanding of how citizens respond to the memes published by Taiwan's ministries in their own voice. As stated

previously, this paper will not analyze bot comments' content. Hence, this paper excludes bot comments when counting the frequency of each comment type.

Figure 11 illustrates the amounts of each comment type that appear as the top 5 "the most relevant comments." The coding strategies and selection mechanism for selecting comments have been explained in the section on methodology. Figure 11 shows that the comments react positively to the posted meme types that appear most frequently. The most frequently appeared comment types are playing jokes, complimenting editors, and agreeing with the sent messages. All those comment types have favorable connotations since they either express compliments or agreement. In this case, playing jokes can be understood as a sign of approval since the commenters are only willing to play jokes with published memes when they have approved and admired the contained jokes.

Comments with negative connotations appear less than those with positive connotations. Even when counted combined, the number of comments that show disagreement or resentment will still be less than the comment type that shows agreement. The great difference in the amount of agreeing comments and disagreeing comments suggests that the admiring voices surpass dissenting voices in the collected comments, while comments considering public service delivery remain incidental.

Figure 11: Amounts of each comment type

Figure 11	
Comment type	Amount

Complimenting government	6
Complimenting editors	18
Agreeing with the sent message	20
Disagreeing with the sent message	7
Resentment on unrelated issues	11
Self-expression	9
Sharing relevant experiences	17
Play the joke	20
Suggesting government	3
Asking for information from the government	3

6. Discussion

The discussion section of this paper provides further analysis of the research result presented in the previous section, discussing the relationship between Taiwan's ministries' meme usage and citizen reactions. This paper suggests that the determining factor of the audience size, meaning how many citizens the ministries can reach, is not meme usage but public concern over the issues. Different humor styles and types also influence citizen reactions and engagement in the memes published by the ministries, while meme usage also plays an observable role in information dissemination, community building, and public service delivery.

6.1 Relation between Meme Usage and Number of Page Followers

This paper's research result has shown that higher meme usage does not correspond to a larger number of page followers, which can be interpreted as the audience the ministry can reach through social media and the memes posted online. This finding may suggest that meme usage has no positive relation or only a weak relation to attracting more citizens to engage with the ministries' Facebook pages. From the research result, one can observe that meme usage is not the most significant factor in deciding the size of audiences. Yet, citizens' attention to the issues may largely determine the number of the ministries' Facebook pages. Namely, the ministries responsible for issues the citizens are concerned about will have more followers on Facebook than others.

The ministries with the most Facebook followers are the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the

Ministry of Economic Affairs. Despite the low meme usage, the Ministry of Health

and Welfare has significantly more followers than other ministries. This distribution

of followers can be attributed to citizens' concern over various social issues.

Academia Sinica, Taiwan's highest-level research center, published a survey

regarding Taiwanese concern over various social issues (Sinica, 2021). The survey

asked the respondents to rank 32 social issues based on their perceived level of

concern, and the survey then showed how the Taiwanese view those prominent social

issues (Sinica, 2021). The top 5 concerns in Taiwan citizens' minds are social security,

food security, health care, education, and economic development. Among those

topics, food security and health care are managed by the Ministry of Health and

Welfare, which explains the reason behind its tremendous followers. The pandemic in

2020 also gave the Ministry of Health and Welfare massive attention since it was the

main governmental department dealing with the pandemic and related policies (Liu,

2021). Other ministries with more followers are also ministries responsible for topics

the citizens are attentively concerned about. Although the external threat from China

did not occupy Taiwan's citizens as much as possible to make the issue land on the

top 5 concerned issues in the nation, cross-strait relations are always an important

issue in the country (Hu, 2023). It is then unsurprising to see the Ministry of National

Defense receive more followers than others. Although memes are known for their

strong appeal to various cultures and rapid spread (Ross & Rivers, 2017), employing

memes solely is insufficient for enlarging the base of audiences in public

administration social media usage. Citizens' attention and the following engagement

may not be fully attributed to the government's strategy of social media usage,

including a more novel strategy of employing memes.

For public administration, one of the primary purposes of using memes is information dissemination, an indispensable step in policy marketing. Mergel revealed that the primary purpose of the government's social media usage is to be present at the places where people gather, and social media is where citizens gather in the contemporary era (Mergel, 2013). This paper discovers that citizens are attracted to the government's social media pages when they provide information they perceive as relevant or useful, confirming that citizens mostly gather in places that provide information concerning their interests or daily lives (Bonsón et al., 2015). Moreover, this finding also confirms Lin's findings on the effectiveness of memes, which suggested that citizens' interest in policy is mostly triggered by the perceived relevance of information rather than the humor of mems (Lin, 2022). In this case, humor can serve as a bonus in luring citizens' attention but is insufficient for being the sole motive of citizens' attention and further engagement.

6.2 Employment of the Humor Styles and Types

The research results of this paper reveal that affiliative and aggressive humor styles are the most used, and there is no significant difference in their frequency. This result confirms the research results of Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong's paper, which revealed that the most used humor styles were affiliative and aggressive through researching Internet memes (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). However, the approaches of affiliative and aggressive humor styles are distinctively different. The biggest commonality between these two humor styles is the non-first-person narratives, suggesting Taiwan's ministries' strong preference for non-first-person narratives. This preference may be attributed to the main purposes of ministries' social media usage: information provision and policy marketing (Liu, 2021). When

ministries use memes to inform the citizens of specific incidents, measures, or policies, the memes focus more on issues the ministries wish to promote rather than personal experiences. Hence, ministries prefer using non-first-person narratives more than first-person narratives.

Regarding citizen reaction to meme usage, affiliative humor receives the most likes, with self-defeating humor ranking second. The highest number of comments and shares belong to affiliative, showing that affiliative is the humor styles that perform best in facilitating citizens' reactions and engagement. This corroborates Lin's findings, stating that memes carried affiliative humor elicit greater interest, positive attitudes, and shareability, regardless of the controversial policy or message (Lin, 2022). However, this slightly deviated from Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong's research result, which claimed that self-defeating would reach the widest spread (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015).

The affiliative humor style may perform this well due to its relatively weak aggressiveness compared to the aggressive humor style, echoing the paper published by Beskow, Kumar, and Carley (2020). Beskow, Kumar, and Carley (2020) hypothesized that memes tend to receive fewer shares and likes during the election period due to people's hesitation in sharing controversial memes and publicly endorsing strong political stances (Beskow et al., 2020). This hesitation to publicly endorse political stances may be able to provide a plausible explanation for affiliative outstanding performance. Since the affiliative amuses others through positive wit and aims to facilitate positive relationships with others rather than mockery, the affiliative style is less aggressive (Martin et al., 2003). Affiliative style may be perceived as less

controversial and less militant, and this more friendly style of humor decreases citizens' hesitation in sharing and commenting on memes. Therefore, affiliative is the style that best engages citizens, and Taiwan ministries should consider employing this style more to enhance civic participation.

Regarding the various types of humor, sarcasm is the most frequently employed, followed by personification. Nevertheless, no differences exist between the frequency of using comparison, exaggeration, pun, and surprise. The difference in frequency between each humor type is insignificant, supporting Taecharungroj and Nueangjamnong's research claim of no discernable differences in the usage of seven types of humor (Taecharungroj & Nueangjamnong, 2015). This may indicate that Taiwan's ministries have no strong preference for humor types, suggesting that the country's public administrations are still exploring the most suitable strategy for meme usage on social media. Moreover, this paper's research results show that there is an existing gap between the government's usage and citizens' preferences. The humor type that receives the highest number of likes is not the one used most frequently, and the humor types that receive the most shares and comments are also not the ones with the widest use. Hence, this paper suggests that Taiwan's ministries formulate a clear strategy for employing humor styles.

6.3 Self-representation

Although there are some dissenting comments showing disagreement on the sent messages or resentment toward the governments, this paper's research has shown that many of the collected comments, more than dissenting voices, are related to

agreements on the sent messages and compliments toward the government and the editors who create the memes and serve as the voice of the public administration. This paper argues that those favorable comments can prove that meme usage can serve self-representation purposes for the ministries. The notion of self-representation refers to the actors deliberately shaping their impression favorably to enhance likeability and worthiness (DePaula et al., 2018), and the appreciative comments the posted memes have attracted may assist the ministries to be seen as more liked and trusted. Jason Liu's book also revealed that ministries have used memes as a primary tool for policy marketing and promoting the governments' achievements (Liu, 2021). Memes, then, in this context, can be regarded as a trendier and more innovative tool that serves traditional communicative goals: enhance likeability and shape favorable organizational identity (van Riel & Balmer, 1997).

This paper's results have shown that appreciative voices surpass dissenting voices in the studied comments section, and this situation can be attributed to memes' ability to debilitate viewers' critical thinking on the messages carried by memes and the source of information (Hu, 2023). Moreover, memes also encourage viewers to develop positive perceptions of the senders of memes (Lin et al., 2023), which, in this case, are the ministries. Consequently, memes have become a useful tool for ministries to enhance likeability. The ministries use memes to enhance likeability by showing their wit and willingness to adopt the trend, and memes also help the ministries not only adopt using social media but also learn to take advantage of it.

6.4 Community Building

A significant portion of the collected comments showed their approval toward the memes in ways that can facilitate community building, referring to playing jokes and sharing experiences. Leiser's research assured that correctly deciphering the jokes in memes is an important step in establishing and consolidating online group identity (Leiser, 2022). When the ministries create and publish the memes, showing their ability to catch the trend and make memes based on the trendy jokes, the commenters in the comment section echo by playing along with the memes to show their understanding of the jokes. This common understanding of the memes and the jokes in those memes is then the basis of community building, and this understanding also serves to distinguish who is in the same social group and who is not (Mortensen & Neumayer, 2021). In this context, this community building may encourage livelier citizen engagement and higher public trust since the citizens regard the ministries as standing on the same side as them. Moreover, some commenters in the comment section are willing to share their personal experience to the comment sections. This further facilitates community building and bonding with the groups. Citizens' willingness to share their personal stories in the comment section showcases that the memes posted by the ministries can echo the public's lives, and the public and the government then form a community based on common knowledge of the memes and also common living experiences.

6.5 Public Service Delivery and Co-production

The collected data contains a few comments that reveal the unlocked potential of online public service delivery. This encompasses public service transactions like

seeking assistance or requiring action on matters related to public service that were previously conducted offline but have now been transferred to online social media platforms (Criado & Villodre, 2020). In the studied comment sections, there are comments asking for information related to taxation and other issues related to public services, and there are comments suggesting that the government can provide information in ways that are more convenient for the citizens to share. Although those comments mostly deviate from the topics of posted memes, the ministries will reply to them with the answers they are seeking or refer them to whoever is responsible for the issues. This suggests that the comment section on social media with responsive governments can facilitate public service delivery on social media, helping those citizens with needs but may not be able to access the information themselves.

Citizens react to government-posted memes with potentially unrelated requests regarding public service since they may be unfamiliar with the public service and the operation of public administrations. Those citizens were previously unreached by the public administrations but are now reachable due to memes and social media. Moreover, citizens not only passively wait for the answers but actively provide constructive suggestions to the government on improving information provision regarding public policies. In the collected comments, one can observe the potential of public service delivery and co-production behind citizen reaction and engagement in the government's meme usage.

7. Conclusion

Focusing on Taiwan's ministries, this research delves into the relationship between meme usage and public reaction toward this strategy on social media. This study aims to understand the frequency of employing different humor styles and types and their influence on the size of the followers and citizen engagement, providing insight into the role of memes in governmental online communication strategies. This study contributes to the broader understanding of social media strategies in public administration by highlighting memes' function in fostering a favorable perception of the government, community building, and public service delivery through deploying humor.

On a practical level, this research offers actionable insights for governmental entities to enhance their favorable reputation and citizen engagement by appropriately utilizing memes on social media while suggesting that governments should align their humor styles with public preferences. Moreover, this study emphasizes memes' potential to improve public service delivery and debilitate critical thinking. These are two avenues worth further investigation, and this paper contributes to the academic communities by revealing memes' potential in aspects previously understudied.

However, this paper suffers from several limitations. One of the main limitations of this study is the reliance on the current sample of memes and corresponding memes, which amount has been limited due to Facebook's algorithm. Moreover, the scope of this research is confined to the specific context of Taiwan, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to other regions. Hence, this study suggests that future

research should broaden the research scope by including cases from various regions. Further studies could also explore the long-term effects of meme usage on public trust and cooperation, examining how the relationship between the government and the public evolves over time. Moreover, future studies should consider cross-case studies to compare the engagement level of governments that employ memes and the governmental entities that do not, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the novel strategies of employing memes on social media.

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Facebook. (n.d.-b). Turn comment ranking on or off for your Facebook page. https://www.facebook.com/help/www/1494019237530934?paipv=0&eav=Afb WXWU-aymCidLHDi3F3vUg9QWX0KFfiTmaDJ-SIh8KpVnlqF6whLiSnmND-JO3zVY&_rdr

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Facebook page name	Translation of the name	Responsible department	Followers	Total posts	Meme	Meme percentage
內政部	Ministry of the Interior	Ministry of the Interior	217000	22	8	36.36
外交部	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ROC（Taiwan）	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	273000	77	1	1.3
國防部發言人	Spokesperson of Ministry of National Defense	Ministry of National Defense	413000	98	2	2.04
中華民國財政部	Ministry of Finance of Republic of China	Ministry of Finance	152000	27	7	25.93
教育部	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education	287000	21	7	33.33
經濟部	Ministry of Economic Affairs	Ministry of Economic Affairs	349000	57	1	1.75

衛生福利部	Ministry of Health and Welfare	Ministry of Health and Welfare	1500000	73	1	1.37
文化部	Ministry of Culture	Ministry of Culture	300000	85	5	5.88
數位發展部	Ministry of Digital Affairs	Ministry of Digital Affairs	15000	39	1	2.56
環境部	Ministry of Environment	Ministry of Environment	118000	80	1	1.25
交通部	Ministry of Transportation and Communication, ROC.	Ministry of Transportation and Communication	107000	97	0	0
勞動部	Ministry of Labor	Ministry of Labor	279000	46	0	0
農業部	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Agriculture	363000	158	0	0

Appendix B

内政部 (Ministry of the Interior)

Number	date	meme	Humor style	Humor type	like	comment	Share	site
101	29 Mar		Aggressive	Surprise	215	18	107	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02EvxRYLHHipEjighVvRCr4qZqqsPsytnBq8MGYn9MXuzQ4xYYSH4GAzAR9j2Wg1Xpl

102	6 Mar		Affiliative	Personification	849	85	31	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02wTGSsww3AVx7ikn24SkF1u7Ko5eCpeppdJycxoPoRyXoHwUgrUPG85krFotsDqjQl?__cft__[0]=AZVXJe7
103	14 Feb		Affiliative	Silliness	393	39	24	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0MjRZhbHQRh4ZWHwo9sFPQv6vXVHa6emp6quxTuiDqcc73mGS2SmhnmMDiPiuujgwl
104	13 Feb		Aggressive	Sarcasm	372	22	51	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02dnf7QX1VCVc2JcNnxZQwmkKtfZUbmZ4pQJgqc9DJNZ9bUTE2XW4oMJGQdgq5Hgenl
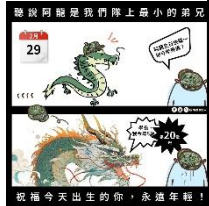
105	11 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1000	13	93	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0QY3AhN5pmXvdw1bHJuaiMGACZY5LWqo8R1w3FwmkK9mmDrbkwAqAbjoRDuMW3d8kl
106	9 Feb		Aggressive	Exaggeration	256	9	22	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid04q3Yq1PUcUQBy7A6AmmFCTDghUhFbNpG7xddzVDBwmaMuHVPYir2i8ZtmCvzeDB9l
107	7 Feb		Affiliative	Pun	142	6	21	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02M7PDuVKcdT59QxGPbLegGdWzSFJr8RXYdMYc3NZDKB9515YEKARsAJpsJnymL9DHl

108	23 Jan		Aggressive	Comparison	557	23	19	https://www.facebook.com/moi.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0rp4jjbQkAWUsKSqR3qeXMNvfJeTkSn5bX3KCWma9vgqD2fLmmkeW5bkgqMgbsfdpl

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ROC（Taiwan）

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site
201	14 Mar		Affiliative	Comparison	434	18	40	https://www.facebook.com/mofa.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02oXVVqUrktaRq3Q9ooaoQneiHo8TVvyxAmDwc8afKzzB4QzjKKtkFCxSmntzwTwSVl
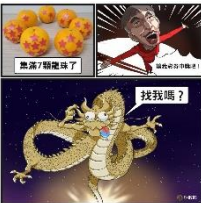
Spokesperson of Ministry of National Defense

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site
301	22 Mar		Affiliative	Comparison	909	73	20	https://www.facebook.com/MilitarySpokesman/posts/pfbid02iKXVpLf1nSVmbGRoktGSdM59miK9Aj5S8Tb6LXBHrzG7EQvap4uJzszresYGpqqXl
302	29 Feb		Affiliative	Exaggeration	561	32	17	https://www.facebook.com/MilitarySpokesman/posts/pfbid02ymAACREjLxFkKLS2ZAzahFDEKTJi1EvtupZx5VhZ9XQX3yxT5arjiiimrf7pnoy8l

Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site

401	14 Mar		Aggressive	Pun	1000	107	163	https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02bU12yPnGgVcAdTM9itHdcrFQb47jdSLFZhQXAZPzqXi9nYdNACZtAZKoMBdBaTpKl
402	7 Mar		Affiliative	Exaggeration	5100	86	296	https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0hUi9jjYpPxF3aqnyaWjkzZ73GvxuTRsJRLq77bkTTo2ddV9g4N8ShiURjgYcZ12tl
403	26 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	419	40	33	https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0FdaoQwwcWMLMfHJifg77oKpKbh9Z4TgGugdHNmxCkJxTU3ryFTnytwzhM6qW882ml

404	14 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	550	18	28	https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0itcnqjbng7XUSsG6sTzNPQfZi1QpNC3QziSbmUrndz2GnELBgBJRRkt1pUxSmEVNl
405	10 Feb		Aggressive	Surprise	229	24	14	https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid04iGrXgEYtjcivydgnUJQfvpU8b9GvL1d2wiuETQQmJ6oJee6YqiJGTdWcJEw9orkl
406	5 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1000	46	51	https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0344A6zW2t2Y58QRN2LPa5EKafS7j5noxamkP6bWcTUNHpiCgvNhjF4BFWFhqhrHB3l

| 407 | 9 Jan | | Self-defeating | Sarcasm | 2900 | 19 | 152 | https://www.facebook.com/mof.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0UWFf5phqcM3yRnZKJHFotQahmYsA3n1DSbyFCXhWXXjEQsPHug3f2SiZes6B9pqCl |

Ministry of Education

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site
501	20 Mar		Self-defeating	Surprise	532	117	30	https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid0pdbj1fndGhZFiBmP66Ues497Y9Y9ExjtHm2oWpY3kfinF48k7tn3SxEYpFaaS9ZUl

| 502 | 1 Mar | | Aggressive | Surprise | 884 | 60 | 66 | https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid02G4UwDw84k6B6oezvLpjFViFppMvgbDddBc1q2w7KLAcRrEkikKuziP4dvpJJgYCcl |
| 503 | 14 Feb | | Affiliative | Personification | 377 | 39 | 109 | https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid02R87NfNfLzDZ15Q1kwzk6pVKAWwnp9NDBGbeCjrqNkDuJwPHbJ2jneGAKWGBGZ9KTl |

504	11 Feb		Aggressive	personification	157	13	10	https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid04gRB2EQP7MnNprskNVKDbLjbmQ3whpjY7jwUcAhnFPGj62fwRsbFr8jxzhfHq7vGl
505	25 Jan		Aggressive	personification	265	20	31	https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid0qarpiDgb2gTPNDpYJYgr39CCJvXZCvwyjvZZ3wqRQcp3AcW4YaZ3aMXAJnW9hXhXl
506	22 Jan		Aggressive	Personification	1100	27	84	https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid0nxBez8Cm1RpcpdbKC2tMnCCuBc7Ec6ZRjsjcwYtgndxHtagDDkxLgKU6aRYGMxvPl

| 507 | 15 Jan | | Aggressive | Sarcasm | 456 | 32 | 40 | https://www.facebook.com/www.edu.tw/posts/pfbid0C1nq3d6Z7FJaiTWjepDxbQfHfozDHEKy8CGe9nRQW2v247ck9sx5iyPwAF5JdSRwl |

Ministry of Economic Affairs

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site
601	24 Jan		Self-enhancing	Comparison	908	60	X	https://www.facebook.com/moea.gov.tw/videos/344715235042155

Ministry of Health and Welfare

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site
701	20 Mar		Self-enhancing	Silliness	334	49	X	https://www.facebook.com/mohw.gov.tw/videos/428169873204647/

Ministry of Culture

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	Share	site
801	6 Mar		Aggressive	Sarcasm	4800	315	177	https://www.facebook.com/www.moc.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02kisvGwhSPF655gGmtWCCmsRiKhBWifSTCqtoM8Kn8Wcn2irrAs694jKD8bxVsCxtl

802	19 Feb		Affiliative	Sarcasm	1200	49	165	https://www.facebook.com/www.moc.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02dnmSnimG8Kz9r6Q7gT7q8BuDzD9AW7VcWf26j3przyMA7oLASiB16xDjH3zpzgepl
803	7 Feb		Affiliative	Pun	223	18	X	https://www.facebook.com/www.moc.gov.tw/posts/398986579200339:398986579200339
804	24 Jan		Affiliative	Pun	183	10	8	https://www.facebook.com/www.moc.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0EVjHajqWhZqDkV88e2xDLh46jGmBzQZHuYmUUFfKQFEt4Sv7HuaRMPf65pk1r25pl

805	17 Jan		Affiliative	Exaggeration	1000	601	303	https://www.facebook.com/www.moc.gov.tw/posts/pfbid0Lo3AVu4jwMzWUeJ1UGbMi9G88pcz8mwpXykSwRvRr52GCaV1dH4qexXDCSAX8mZWl

Ministry of Digital Affairs

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site
901	15 Feb		Aggressive	Sarcasm	627	43	19	https://www.facebook.com/moda.gov.tw/posts/pfbid02tWMSnmmkGL1H2d4tZa7dAUmnPEseXTgMA5YbGstEcdKF4yS8df4xUudV3B6WxFoTl

Ministry of Environment

Number	date	meme	style	type	like	comment	share	site

| 1001 | 23 Jan | | Self-defeating | Personification | 261 | 12 | 12 | https://www.facebook.com/MOENV.TW/posts/pfbid02NxoEa7ne7V4EayDFBF7b34ByJiQYT1QmZFsp5FPacnijL36ctZBMxa2yk7k4jgPl |

(Suspected bot comments will be colored in light blue, and those comments will not be translated since they will not be included in the later content analysis)

Coding color: complimenting the government (orange), complementing the editors who create memes (dark orange), agreeing with the sent message (green), disagreeing with the sent message (dark green), resentment on unrelated issues (purple), self-expression (grey), sharing relevant information (brown), playing the jokes (yellow), suggesting government (dark purple), asking information from government (red).

Ministry of the Interior

date	meme	Humor style	Humor type	Top 5 comment	Translation
29 Mar		Affiliative	Surprise	1. 法務部主張有人涉嫌犯罪，法務部自行偵辦，有公權力政府單位無需誘導教唆推責司法濫訴。勞保局及政府單位有職權自行審酌及移送檢警單位偵辦。政府單位自行主張涉違法自行偵辦資方人員勿藉口拖延時效性相當於滅證保全證據扣押公司監視	

| | | | 器影音及高雄市勞工局調解影音還原事發當下提繳工資含加班費、約定薪資,出勤及薪資資料佐證。 | |

不燃放爆竹

不飛揚冥紙

不亂丟菸蒂

不亂燒雜草

掃墓不用火!!

特訊不要再燒草!

是請你們來掃墓,不是來放火的!!

2. 內政部統計通報 113 年第 8 週:"外界常云「因為房價太高導致年輕人結不了婚、不生小孩」,應是一個聽似有理 但無確實根據的說法;實現居住正義固然重要,但是否擁有住宅與不婚、不育,從數據角度 來看,兩者間更像是獨立事件,不宜混為一談。"內政部邏輯,因為婚前無房比起婚前有房者更會生,所以房價跟婚育率無關。事實:不管房價怎麼

				動，婚前無房者本就比婚前有房者更會生。官員們自己看看這個邏輯和不合理，因為基層公務人員比資深公務人員更常加班，所以組織是否精簡、法規是否好執行，不影響公務人員工作效率。兩者為獨立事件，不宜混為一談。？？？？？	
3.				內政部到底有沒有在管國家公園，長期被佔用國有地露營野炊、養狗咬人，管都管不動？	
4.				涉業務刊載不實共犯結構的勞保局特權福陞和福蒸，勞保局自行杜撰審核無誤構陷毫無犯罪之意	

				勞工，政府單位和資方人員當下沒有誠實溝通，政府單位單向無中生有自行主張與資方約定，資方和政府單位以虛偽之意敷衍勞工漠視勞權勞工有知和了解的權利。監察院立案調查政府單位服務提升改善勿吃案怠惰處置業務刊載不實用，政府單位推責監察院督促提升政府單位服務之社會責任反過來要求狀況外的勞工給交代，政府教唆煽動誘導司法濫訴主張涉刑責政府單位以自行名義主動偵辦。政府不改善督導政府單位輔導改善政府單位漠視勞權反	

				過來刁難狀況外勞工。 無法有善意相當於把勞工形同罪人般對待， 政府單位一直以來都是單向交流，互動非雙向 ， 且明知資方及公務人員很懂法很明白怎樣欺負人不違法 （法規完善是否有待加強） ，而法令都是由政府自己來解讀及立法。政府帶頭欺凌勞工政府單位無中生有把狀況外勞工罪人般對待咄咄逼人仗勢欺人自生議題惡鬥欺凌勞工同等用心精神去把關督察資方，政府單位欲蓋彌彰推責上行下效，政府單位和資方人員兩套標準嚴以律勞工寬	

				以待己。至於政府單位是否罰資方無需推責勞工，政府自行表示不要罰資方相當於是政府選擇是否包庇 偏頗資方責任在於政府人員良知是否有確實查辦案件 與勞工無關,政府對其他被政府罰 算還有些 良知的業者是否公平,相當於政府能處理的只是還有些良知的資方,是政府對還有些良知的資方很不公平。 5. 政府單位和資方人員自行主張用話術推給勞工做而不敢當，政府單位和資方人員自行主張主詞用自身勿推責勞工。政府單位和資方人員相當於知法玩法	

				造成法規只是表面功夫無一視同仁，對其他被罰業者不公相當於無一視同仁差別待遇拉低求職者勞權。保有良知營造良好友善的夥伴工作環境勿欺壓，勞權是一視同仁非歧視對待。	
6 Mar		Affiliative	Personification	1. 推棲地保育 2. 這梗真老 XD 3. Good 4. 有會做事的政府 真的讓人很放心又安心。辛苦了 👏 ❤️ 🙏 5. 雖然知道不應該，但看起來真的好好吃喔 希望未來復育可以成功到上餐桌	1. Shout out for the Habitat Conservation 2. This joke is really old XD 3. Good 4. It's really reassuring to have a government that can do its job. Thank you for your hard work 👏 ❤️ 🙏

					5. I know I shouldn't, but it looks really tasty... I hope that in the future, the restoration will be successful enough to make it to the dinner table!
14 Feb		Affiliative	Silliness	1. 造成二十幾年前 921 大地震的車籠埔斷層經過台中大坑，完全不理解這個地方現在還在持續造鎮，還要建捷運，這是台中一個好像沒有人探討的廢地變黃金的故事，建議可以作一個專集來研究，應該非常有可看性 ***There is no other relevant comment**	1. The Chelongpu Fault, which caused the 921 earthquake twenty years ago, passes through the Taichung Taikeng, and I don't understand at all that this place is still continuing to build a town and a metro. This is one of

					the stories of Taichung where nobody seems to have explored how a wasteland turned into gold, and I suggest that we can make a special episode of this story, which is supposed to be very watchable.
13 Feb		Aggressive	Sarcasm	1. Name (it was tagging someone else) ***There is no other relevant comment**	
11 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1. 千頭萬緒。就從是不能亂動用財產。要小額運用各種不同買便宜好康活動 2. 我們要留給孩子的是德，不是錢	1. Thinking a lot. It is important not to misuse property. Should use a small

				*There is no other relevant comment	amount of money for different kinds to buy cheap goods. 2. what we want to leave to our children is virtue, not money.
9 Feb		Aggressive	Exaggeration	*There is no other relevant comment	
7 Feb		Affiliative	Pun	1. 初一，把握時間給五天。到初五！ *There is no other relevant comment	
23 Jan		Aggressive	Comparison	1. 感恩分享宣導 想上山堆雪人嗎 車子記得先上雪鏈 辛苦了 順安 2. A screenshot strongly criticizes Ma Ying-jeou, who was Taiwan's	1. thanks for sharing, do you want to go to the mountain in to

				president from 2008 to 2016	build a snowman, remember to put the snow chain on the car first, good work, good luck.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ROC（Taiwan）

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	Translation
14 Mar		Affiliative	Comparison	1. 如果再年輕一點，真想報名！ 2. Name (it was tagging someone else) 3. 培養綠色子弟兵…？	1. If I were a little younger, I would really like to sign up. 2. Name 3. Training protégés for the Green party?

Spokesperson of Ministry of National Defense

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	Translation
22 Mar		Affiliative	Comparison	1. 加油加油努力工作 2. 新兵洞洞八，手上無簽，準備抽籤 金防部砲指部 3. 作為家長，兒子東引是很難得的經驗。 4. 很玄喔 5. 國軍辛苦了.	1. Come on, work hard 2. Freshman 008, no drawing on hands, ready for the lottery, Kinmen Defense Command 3. As a parent, it is a precious experience with a son who will go to Dongyin 4. Very mysterious 5. Thanks for your hard work, national army

29 Feb		Affiliative	Exaggeration	1. 國軍加油.辛苦了. 2. 哈哈😆 3. 要說…義務役的帥哥們…金來哦！ 4. 願…歲歲平安… 5. 讚！	1. Thanks for your hard work, national army 2. Haha 3. Should say...handsome volunteer in the national army, handsome guys... come here, oh! 4. Wish every year is a safe year 5. Good!

Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	Translation

14 Mar		Aggressive	Pun	1. 財政部 加油辛苦 2. 這樣搞，房價根本不會跌 3. 錢四腳，人兩腳，追不上 4. 一千萬能買什麼？ 5. 重點是要繳多少	1. Thank you for your hard work, Ministry of Finance 2. This measure will not lead to the reducing housing price 3. Four legs for the money, two legs for human, unreachable 4. What can ten million buy? 5. The point is to payment amount
7 Mar		Affiliative	Exaggeration	1. 請問已經兩年沒工作了還要報稅嗎？ 2. 請問要去那邊改地址？ 3. 小編讚讚😂 4. 這很有梗！不錯！哈哈	1. Is it necessary to report tax after being jobless for two

				5. 煩捏，有聲音的畫面(´▽ ˋ) 等等！！！！後面那兩隻黑影是…	years? 2. Where to change address? 3. Editor good 4. It's very funny! Good! Haha 5. Annoying, such a vivid portrait, wait! The two black shadows behind are
26 Feb	當中獎發票過期忘了領	Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1. 沒這個困擾 2. 請問千萬元得主可以支助我一下嗎？我目前在準備警察特考，白天工作、晚上讀書，讀書時間不多，而且回到家也有些累，都睡半小時就起床讀書，去年差 0.1666 達錄取標準，很羨慕全職考生！ 3. 我都不會忘記！因為都沒有中獎😭 4. 哈哈，我絕對不會忘的。 5. 腦海有聲音	1. No this problem 2. May I ask the winner of the ten million dollars to support me? I am currently preparing for the Police Special Examination, I work during the

103

					day and study at night, I don't have much time to study, and I am a bit tired when I get home, I sleep for half an hour and then get up to study, last year I was 0.1666 short of the admission standard, I envy the full-time student! 3. I won't forget! I won't forget because I didn't win the lottery. 4. Haha, I'll never forget it.

					5. There are voices in my head
14 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1. 什麼節???是明天開工,年假結... 2. 那個麥克風很財政部（？晚上要記得設鬧鐘 ⏰ 3. 有沒有特休差很多 😆 4. 看完這個「明天上班」好像不悲傷了，有沒有滿滿正能量😎哈哈哈哈哈😂 5. 大年初五，吉祥如意	1. What's the holiday? It's tomorrow's work day, annual leave is over... 2. The microphone has a style of the ministry of finance (?). Remember to set the alarm clock at night. 3. there's a big difference between having special days off or not. 4. after reading this "work start tomorrow" seems to be not sad, haven't it full of positive energy 😎

					hahahahahah ahaha 😂 5. good luck on the 5th day of the Lunar New Year
10 Feb		Aggressive	Surprise	1. 這個龍好可愛🐲 2. 這隻龍不錯哦！ 3. 凱文，是你嗎？ 4. 橘滿 7 顆龍珠了 5. 我喜愛 "集滿七顆龍珠了"	1. this dragon is so cute 2. this dragon is nice 3. Kevin, is that you? 4. 7 Dragonballs in Orange collected 5. I love "7 Dragonballs are all collected"!
5 Feb		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1. 不要叫我，夢裡甚麼都有 2. 我好怕我寄養的狗狗，全部都成為緝毒犬~~~ 3. 謝謝政府快速闢謠瘦肉精疑雲 🙏，請問以後是不是可以提供政府辛苦製作的短影片下載點，讓想轉發的人可以快速取得影片？謝謝。 4. 墨非定律升級版 5. 我也很怕 😄😄😄🧡🧡🧡……	1. don't call me, there's everything in my dreams. 2. I'm afraid that all my foster dogs will become drug-sniffing dogs 3. thank you for the government's quick response to the rumors about the

					lean pork protein 🙏 Can you provide download points for the government's hard-worked short videos, so that people who want to forward them, so the people want to spread the videos, can get them quickly? Thank you. 4. Murphy's Law Upgrade 5. I'm scared too 😄😄😄😄 😄😄😄😄 😂😂😂❤️ ❤️❤️...
9 Jan		Self-defeating	Sarcasm	1. 這個眼睛睜開/閉眼的反差也太大 🤭🤭（重點錯 2. 我覺得最後一天眼角要帶淚水.... 3. 申報時😲 4. 申報時要眨很多眼啊 5. 台灣（TW）	1. the contrast between open/closed eyes is too big 🤭🤭🤭🤭 🤭🤭🤭🤭 🤭🤭 (wrong emphasis)

					2. I think there should be tears in my eyes on the last day .... 3. when I declare my tax. 4. You have to blink a lot when you make a declaration. 5. Taiwan (ᴛᴡ)

Ministry of Education

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	Translation
20 Mar		Self-defeating	Surprise	1. 請問教育部何時要處理兒福文教基金會的問題？ 「看起來」它的主業務應該是兒童福利，那不是該歸衛福部管理嗎？ 2. 為什麼不救我的生命呢？為什麼放任那些霸凌者對待他人？ 3. 老婆待產陣痛才再說 辛苦與偉大，當初怎麼不避孕？我已經說得很文囉！ 4. 我身障我都是被霸	1. When is the Ministry of Education going to deal with the issue of the Children's Welfare Foundation? "It seems that its main business should be children's welfare. Shouldn't it

				凌、脫褲子、戳小鳥、他人惡意靠近響呻吟，請問在學校如果避免？根本不可能，學校如同社會一般，您們大人都解決不了了，還要要求什麼？ 5. 連基本尊重都不會的教育部長下台好嗎? 總質詢一直插嘴到底有沒有教養啊這不是幼稚園就會教導的東西嗎	be under the management of the Ministry of Health and Welfare? 2. why don't you save my life? Why do you let those bullies treat others? 3. only wait until the wife is pregnant and in pain to talk about the hard work and the greatness of it; why didn't you use birth control in the first place? I've already said it very politely! 4. I'm physically challenged, and I've been bullied, stripped of my pants, poked in the dickens, and moaned maliciously

					when people get close to me, so how can I avoid that at school? It's impossible, school is like society, you adults can't solve it, what more can you ask for? 5. Can the Minister of Education step down if he can't even show basic respect? Keeps interrupting during the interpellation and shows no politeness. Ah, isn't respect others something that will be taught in kindergarten?

| 1 Mar | | Aggressive | Surprise | 1. 照相也要飼主同意吧！
2. 前面有一隻超可愛的狗勾
3. 要建立 108 課綱有經過每一位家長同意嗎？廢除 108 課綱，不要造成孩子們課業困擾。
4. (image of a dog saying no)
5. 請中華民國的司法公務員法官警察承認自己犯罪不要威脅我 您們本來就要被關 | 1. you need the owner's permission to take a picture, right?
2. there's a cute dog hook in front of us.
3. Did every parent agree to the creation of the 108 syllabus? Abolish the 108 syllabus and don't make children's schoolwork difficult. 4. (image of a dog saying no)
4. (image of a dog saying no) |
| 14 Feb | | Affiliative | Personification | 1. 謝謝小編製作這麼用心的圖文，對學生和老師都超有幫助的！
2. 貪睡吸血鬼有夠可愛耶 😍 😍

*There are no other relevant comments | 1. thank you for making such a nice illustration, it's very helpful to students and teachers!
2. Sleepy |

					Vampire is so cute 😍😍😍😍!
11 Feb		Aggressive	personification	1. 新年快樂 *there are no other relevant comments	1.Happy new year

25 Jan		Aggressive	Perso nificat ion	*there are no relevant comments shown	
22 Jan		Aggressive	Perso nificat ion	1. 真是不懂、教育部推行班班有冷氣、但為何不推行班班有監視器呢？兒子在學校被打、都沒監視器可以證明💧 *there are no other relevant comments	1. 1. I really don't understand. The Ministry of Education has introduced air-conditioning in every class, but why does it not promote the use of monitors in every class? My son was beaten up at school and there was no monitor to prove it.

| 15 Jan | | Aggressive | Sarcasm | 1. 謝謝小編 👏 👆
 2. 讓鵝子從小駕馭粉紅色就對了！
 3. 畫風好可愛 超讚

 *there are no other relevant comments | 1. Thanks to the editor 👏 👆
 2. it's right for my son to learn how to handle pink.
 3. the drawing is so cute, it's awesome! |

Ministry of Economic Affairs

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	Translation
24 Jan		Self-enhancing	Comparison	1. 辛苦了 2. 辛苦了 3. 好想試試看 4. 好險我有活電證照 5. 超帥	1. good work 2. hard work 3. I want to try it out 4. I'm lucky I have a live electrical license. 5.excellent

Ministry of Health and Welfare

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	translation

| 20 Mar | | Self-enhancing | Silliness | 1. 不敢公開直播原來是想摸頭，弄出一個沒人承認的共識 🤣

2. 笑死了！虐童案反應如樹懶，管制ACG如閃電一樣。

3. 這部會哪時可以解散啊？根本沒啥屁用的政府組織

4. 你們的守護兒童讓人失去笑容

5. 衛服部保護司司長張秀鴛 一個超越憲法的人面對現實唯唯諾諾 面對虛擬重拳出擊… | 1. not daring to go on air in public to appease and make a consensus that no one will admit to 🤣
2. laughed my ass off! The response to the child abuse case was like a sloth, and the control of ACG was like lightning.
3. when will this committee be disbanded? It's a useless government organization.
4. your child protection is making people lose their smiles.
5. the director of the Ministry of Health and Welfare's Protection Department, Mr. Zhang Xiuyuen, a person who is beyond the |

					constitution, who is coy in the face of reality, and who strikes fircefully at the virtual...

Ministry of Culture

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comments	Translation
6 Mar		Aggressive	Sarcasm	1. 春天後母面我阿嬤教的 😊 2. 一絲阿寒一絲阿熱 3. 我相信 4. 一時啊冷，一時啊熱 5. 敬請文化部加開台語班	1. spring is like the stepmother's face my grand mom taught me 2. a touch of cold and a touch of heat 3. i believe 4. sometimes cold, sometimes hot 5. the ministry of culture please offer more Taiwanese classes

19 Feb		Affiliative	Sarcasm	1. 我們都叫呱呱呱 2. 花田一路好像有說過 🤣🤣🤣 3. 剛問我媽，真的就是鴨咪仔 4. 學起來！ 5. 我家娘親都說是鴨咪咪 (Abibi)~~	1. we're all called Quack, Quack, Quack 2. I think I've heard it all the way to Hanafuda. 3. I just asked my mom, it's really Duck Mee Dee 4. learn this! 5. my mom says it's Abibi.
7 Feb		Affiliative	Pun	1. 心想事成，好運龍來 2. 新春快樂 3. 新年快樂 4. 請問有圖	1. All wishes come true, good luck comes. 2. Happy Chinese New Year 3. Happy New Year 4. Do you have the file of the image so that I can download it for my Facebook background? 5. There is the Huang T'u-shui's "Daughter of

				檔可以下載當臉書背景嗎？ 5. 有黃土水《甘露水》！🐲有藝攏好日！新年快樂！	Nectar"! 🎨 Have a good day with art! Happy New Year!
24 Jan		Affiliative	Pun	1. 太有才了吧小編啊～ 2. 啊～～～唱起來！XDD 3. 好哦！ 4. 知道這個都是老人 *there are no other relevant comments	1. you're a genius, editor! 2. ah~~~ sing! 3. good. 4! 4. who know this are old *there are no other relevant comments ♪

| 17 Jan | | Affiliative | Exaggeration | 1. 「雲之獸：來自遠古的守護者」.「月亮的名字」，共下挺國家級臺漫。
2. 最近看完的是穀子《T子%%走》，非常喜歡特殊題材的臺漫。
3. 阮光民《用九柑仔店》，很讓人感 | 1. "Beast of the Clouds: Guardian from the Ancient World". "The Name of the Moon" support jointly National Taiwan Comics.
2. recently read Gouzi's "Tzi%% Go", I really like the special theme of Taiwanese comics.
3) Nguyen Quang Min's "Use Nine Citrus Shop" is very touching and uplifting.
4. "Moss Café", which evokes touching feelings with tiny greenery.
5. "Tomoe's Umeya Chronicles 2" is a fascinating story in terms of architecture and cuisine. |

				動，奮發向上 4. 用微小的綠意，喚起感動的«青苔咖啡店» 5. 「友繪的小梅屋記事簿2」無論建築或料理都吸引人一探究竟。^^	

Ministry of Digital Affairs

date	meme	style	type	Top 5 comment	translation

15 Feb		Aggressive	Sarcasm	1. 很快的五月份就要到了加油～	1. It's coming soon, May is coming!
				2. 非常感謝部長和團隊為台灣資安所做的一切，感謝您！	2. Thank you very much for all that the minister and the team have done for Taiwan's information safety. thank you
				3. 下一個假期是：2月18日，星期天！	3. the next holiday is Sunday, February 18th.
				4. (a image of a thumb up)	4. (an image of a thumb up)
				*no other relevant comment	

Ministry of Environment

date	meme	style	type	comment	Translation

| 23 Jan | | Self-defeating | Personification | 1. 小編 畫的很有藝術！
2. 小編真是隨便畫都很讚😎
3. 洗番💕
4. 這是一種風格～XDD
5. 天氣這麼冷，小編手發抖還能畫得如此傳神👍 | 1. the editor's drawings are very artistic.
2. the editor is really good at everything he draws 😎
3) like!
4. it's a style XDD
5. It's so cold and my hands are shaking and the editors are still able to draw so well 👍 👍 |