

The Effectiveness of UNM Public Relations in Disseminating Information to the Academic Community

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ABSTRACT

In achieving academic success, students need to understand the academic requirements, policies, extracurricular activities, internship or career opportunities, and procedures that apply at the college. Effective and regular information helps academics gather the necessary information and maximize their experience in higher education. This not only enriches the community experience but also builds social, academic, and professional ties. This research is a qualitative descriptive study that aims to determine the effectiveness of UNM Public Relations in disseminating information to the academic community. So that this goal can be achieved, researchers use data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. There were nine informants in this study. The data analysis technique in this research consists of four activity flows, namely: data collection, data presentation, data condensation, and drawing conclusions. The results of research using five indicators show that UNM Public Relations is declared effective in providing information because the academic community has confidence in the competence of UNM Public Relations and the veracity of the information published. However, there are deficiencies in indicators of consistency and sustainability of UNM Public Relations in providing information. The content of the information presented does not fully meet the needs of the academic community. Therefore, UNM Public Relations needs to increase the use of various channels in disseminating information. This research highlights the use of new communication methods that have not yet been used by UNM Public Relations. For example, the use of social media, digital platforms, or other communication tools that can expand the reach of information. This research provides data regarding the extent to which the information conveyed by UNM Public Relations reaches the academic community. This can provide deeper insight into how effective PR efforts are in disseminating information. This research can identify inhibiting and encouraging factors. Based on the findings of this research, recommendations were produced for improving and developing UNM Public Relations.

Keywords: effectiveness, public relations, information, academic community

INTRODUCTION

Public Relations (PR) plays a very important role in an institution, including educational institutions. In English, PR is called Public Relations, derived from the words public which means society, and relations which means relationship. Thus, public relations can be called a builder of relationships with the community. (Niswaty et al., 2019). Public relations plays a key role in ensuring that appropriate, accurate, and relevant information is conveyed to the public or specific audiences. The effectiveness of public relations in disseminating information can be influenced by factors such as communication skills, appropriate use of media, audience segmentation, chosen communication strategies, as well as systematic measurement and evaluation (Castillo-Esparcia et al., 2020; Sulkowski et al., 2022; Tam et al., 2022). Its existence plays a role in planning and organizing communication with other individuals or groups. In this way, you can find out the situation or events of each individual or other group around them. In educational institutions, Public Relations plays a role as a liaison with the community, both inside and outside the institution. In this case, you need to have effective and efficient communication skills. Its existence has a

very important role in publicizing superior programs that will be achieved, promoting and introducing educational institutions to the community, demonstrating success to the public, as well as presenting academic and non-academic information to the academic community (Kriyantono et al., 2022; Sadi & Ferrari, 2022; Santa Soriano & Torres Valdés, 2021; Zhang & Adegbola, 2022).

Public relations is a management function to assess public attitudes, identify policies and procedures for a person or organization in the public interest, as well as plan and carry out a program of activities to gain public understanding and support (Archetti, 2022; Cuenca-Fontbona et al., 2022; Haque & Ahmad, 2017; Nuseir et al., 2022). Public relations has the function of maintaining and building good and beneficial relationships for society, between institutions or institutions. We know that public relations in educational institutions has the task of carrying out and serving the public interest, both internal and external, in building the image of educational institutions and providing the widest possible accountable and current information. Public relations acts as the front line of the face of higher education and must bring optimism and carry out the institution's great mission.

Makassar State University is an educational institution that has an organizational structure in the Planning and Cooperation Bureau. As intended in Article 48 paragraph 2 of Permenristekdikti Number 15 of 2019 concerning UNM Organization and Work Procedures, the Public Relations Subdivision is tasked with the publication, coverage, and documentation process of UNM's agenda and activities as well as strengthening relations with the community. The existence of Public Relations at UNM is very important to open up space for the public to obtain information. In carrying out its functions, UNM Public Relations can convey information to the public through the media accurately, quickly, and easily. If not, it could cause public dissatisfaction with the desired information needs. UNM uses two-way communication through various media to build a positive image among the internal and external public with the aim of disseminating information. The role of UNM Public Relations is to foster good relations between the university and the community, including the academic community and the community outside campus.

UNM Public Relations is also expected to be able to effectively act as a communicator and mediator for the interests of all parties, including university leaders, lecturers, staff, students, and the community. Students have a high need for information related to academic activities, administration, campus facilities, and various other things related to their experience in college. Effective and regular information will help them make the right decisions and understand the processes that occur in the campus environment. By providing regular and effective information, Public Relations can increase student participation in academic activities, student organizations, social activities, and other events. This will create a stronger bond between students and the college and enhance their overall experience. Not only that, students have the right to know the policies, regulations, and procedures that apply at the university. By providing effective and regular information, Public Relations helps create a transparent and accountable environment where students can understand how decisions are made and how campus management is carried out. This also helps encourage student participation in the decision-making process. Students have the right to know the policies, regulations, and procedures that apply at the university. By providing effective and regular information, Public Relations helps create a transparent and accountable environment where students can understand how decisions are made and how campus management is carried out. This also helps encourage student participation in the decision-making process. Effective and regular information also helps students in their personal and academic development. By knowing about various opportunities, personal development programs, academic assistance, scholarships, and other opportunities, students can make the right decisions to improve themselves and achieve their academic goals.

The existence of public relations at UNM is really needed by the community outside and inside campus, namely the academic community. All academic information will be conveyed by public relations as a mediator and publicist in the era of public information openness. All UNM activities, successes, or achievements of the university as an effort to build a positive public image, and academic information according to the needs of the academic community are the duties and functions of public relations. UNM Public Relations uses various media and methods to disseminate information such as Pinisi Magazine,

unm.ac.id Portal, and UNM social media, namely Instagram. However, based on researchers' observations while studying at UNM, the academic community, especially students, still has difficulty obtaining information. The availability of information published by UNM Public Relations through the media still does not meet the needs of the community, such as academic information.

METHOD

This type of research is qualitative. Qualitative research is research in the form of words, sentences, schemes, and descriptions, (Creswell & Clark, 2017; Glaser & Strauss, 2017; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sugiyono, 2007; Suyitno, 2018). This research wants to study and explain things related to the effectiveness of UNM Public Relations in disseminating information to the academic community and to find out what are the weaknesses and inhibiting factors of UNM Public Relations in disseminating information to the academic community. To achieve this goal, researchers utilized data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation, (Sugiyono, 2018). Sources of data consist of primary data and secondary data obtained from observation, documentation, and interviews. Primary data comes from information, statements, and information from informants. Secondary data comes from documentation review. Data collection techniques used, namely observation, interviews, and documentation with reference to research objectives with research indicators based on opinions (Bastian, 2006) about performance, namely inputs, outputs, outcomes, benefits, and impacts. The collected data is checked by triangulation, namely checking the validity of data that uses something other than the data concerned for checking purposes or as a comparison. The data analysis technique uses an interactive analysis model from (Huberman & Miles, 2002). The stages in data analysis taken in this study include data reduction; presentation of data; validation test; and verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of research data is necessary to prepare research results reports so that they can be understood and analyzed in accordance with the research objectives. The aim of this research is to determine the effectiveness of UNM Public Relations in disseminating information as an academic community based on five indicators, namely: credibility, clarity, continuity and consistency, content, and channel:

Credibility

Credible in this case is the academic community's trust in UNM Public Relations and the news/information conveyed/published can be trusted by the individuals who receive it. The quality, capability, and strength of the information conveyed. The credibility aspect of information is to measure the informant's credibility or trust in all published information or news. The credibility of UNM Public Relations regarding what is conveyed depends on the reader's ability to trust and believe what is conveyed by UNM Public Relations. So, a person who is considered correct regarding something that is conveyed is a person who has credibility. As a communicator and mediator, a PR person must have communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal. Public Relations should have expertise and skills in planning, processing, and disseminating information competently. Expertise is one component of a person's credibility. A person is considered to have expertise if they are considered to have reliable experience, knowledge, and mastery of certain skills. So, someone who has credibility certainly has expertise within himself. This credibility aspect is used to measure the informant's views and confidence in their expertise and skills as a Public Relations Officer.

Based on the results of interviews with UNM public relations lecturers and journalism lecturers, it can be concluded that someone who works as a publicist should have skills in the field of communication,

establishing relationships with the public, and skills in writing and publishing information. The results of interviews with the Sub Coordinator of Public Relations and Processing of Information Materials and Publications for UNM Public Relations show that UNM Public Relations has skills and expertise in the field of journalism, namely understanding and being skilled in processing information materials for publication and documentation. In terms of competency, UNM Public Relations has good competency in the field of public relations, because recruitment and position placement are based on their abilities and skills. Based on the results of interviews with informants, it can be understood that the community's trust in the information published by UNM Public Relations is valid. This means that the informant trusts and believes in the veracity of the information published by UNM Public Relations as the university's official information source. In this case, Public Relations becomes a more reliable source of information, because it tends to provide more accurate and trustworthy information than information from less reliable sources.

Clarity

Clarity refers to the ability of the message or information conveyed to be understood easily by the recipient of the message. Communicators must ensure that messages or information are conveyed clearly so that communication goals can be achieved. The clarity component means that the message is presented concisely and firmly but is still easy for the recipient to understand. Clarity indicators are used to assess whether UNM Public Relations uses simple and clear language or phrases, which are easily understood by readers and are well received. Apart from that, this indicator also aims to ensure that information is presented comprehensively and produces a uniform understanding between information providers and information recipients.

Clarity of information is related to the completeness of the information because the more complete the information, the easier and clearer it will be for readers to understand the information. The clarity of the information also depends on the complete structure presented. In providing information, you should use journalistic writing rules that contain the 5W+1H structure (What, Where, When, Why, Who, and How). Information needs to be arranged in a structured manner, both in each word and sentence. In this way, the information will be neatly arranged and attractive to readers. The choice of words in the information must be appropriate to the desired context. In general, the use of language in information must be interesting, and logical, avoid the use of complicated words, and avoid foreign words or phrases. The information presented should be clear and easy for readers to understand.

From various informants' views, it can be understood that UNM Public Relations presents information using clear and easy-to-understand language so that the information provided can be well received by readers. Judging from the informant's view, UNM Public Relations presents information using journalistic writing rules and structures, using language that is easy to understand..

Content

As the main source of information, UNM Public Relations must of course provide various information needed by the academic community. Based on the Duties and Functions of Public Relations, it is not only the publication of the leadership's activity agenda but also the interests of all parties, especially lecturers and students. Based on the results of interviews with UNM Public Relations Lecturers and Journalism Lecturers, it can be understood that UNM Public Relations as the face of higher education, and a source of campus information, is responsible for disseminating academic information to the public, such as information on implementing the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, namely Education or teaching, Research, and Community Service. Apart from that, it also provides student information such as competition or competition information as well as information that can support and develop the knowledge and skills of the academic community.

From the results of interviews with Information and Publication Materials Processors and Public Relations Sub-Coordinators, it can be understood that UNM Public Relations publishes information on the agenda of the leadership, namely the Chancellor, Deputy Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Deputy Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Deputy Chancellor for Planning and Cooperation. UNM Public

Relations plays a role in building a positive public image by presenting positive information. The Public Relations Sub-Coordinator stated that academic information such as KKN, Scholarships, and Competitions should be found out by the academic community in an autodidactic manner. According to him, this information has authority in each section at UNM and each faculty or study program. The results of the interview show that the information published by UNM Public Relations is inadequate (less productive), less informative, and educative. The informant stated that UNM Public Relations only provided information on the agenda of university leaders, while information on the interests of students and lecturers was still minimal. The informant said that UNM Public Relations as a campus information center should provide more informative and educative information such as information on lectures, competitions, services, research, and development.

Continuitas and Consistency

Continuity and Consistency indicators are used to measure the consistency and sustainability of UNM Public Relations in processing information, and always updating information to the academic community. Consistency is used to measure informants' views on the consistency of UNM Public Relations in providing information. Consistency and sustainability in this case are actions that are carried out continuously and sustainably (continuously) (Darwis et al., 2021; Suprianto & Arhas, 2022).

Based on the results of interviews with UNM Public Relations Information and Publication Material Processors, it can be understood that Public Relations has made efforts to provide information to the academic community, but according to him, complete and more detailed information is widely available in various media and can be obtained from websites, bureaus, faculties, study programs, or the institution concerned to obtain more detailed information. The results of interviews with informants, in this case, the academic community, shows that UNM Public Relations has not been consistent in providing information because it has not provided information continuously according to the information needs desired by the academic community, in this case the presentation of information is still monotonous or not varied (only presenting information from one angles).

Channel

A channel for conveying messages from the source, or source, to the receiver or recipient, which includes media is; sound waves, air, telephone, television, radio, etc. In a general sense, when talking about "media", what is meant is communication media" which also includes institutions and organizations where people work. Media is a means of channeling messages conveyed by communicators to communicants. Media is used in communication if the communicant is in a place far from the communicator and/or there are many of them. Channel indicators are used to measure the effectiveness of information dissemination by UNM Public Relations using various conventional and digital media that can be reached by the public, especially academics.

Digital Media

Social media and technology are currently increasingly developing. Technology has developed rapidly over time, from initially using letters, we can now share information without any distance limits. There are more and more teleconferences, chat groups, social media platforms, and other information and communication technologies. The selection of media as a means of disseminating information is used by paying attention to the level of ease and effectiveness of its use. Digital media such as social media, websites, and audiovisuals. Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, WA, Telegram, and TikTok are of course used by almost all academics. Based on the We Are Social report in January 2023, there are around 167 million individuals in Indonesia who actively use social media platforms, equivalent to 60.4 percent of the country's total population. The average use of social media in Indonesia reaches 3 hours 18 minutes every day. In the same period, the number of users of the social media platform TikTok in Indonesia

reached 109.90 million, making it the second largest in the world. The high number of active social media users in Indonesia should be a great opportunity for UNM Public Relations to gain attention and communicate with the academic community through these platforms.

Based on several statements from informants, in this case, the academic community, it can be understood that UNM Public Relations uses media that can be reached by the academic community. However, in its implementation, the informant assessed that UNM Public Relations had not optimized existing media as an information channel. UNM Public Relations should utilize social media such as Instagram and TikTok as a medium for disseminating information. The academic community assesses that the content created on social media has a very big influence and can reach the wider community. This is in accordance with the statement from the Public Relations Sub-Coordinator, so it can be understood that UNM Public Relations still has not optimized the dissemination of information using various media.

Conventional Media

Media for disseminating information other than digital media such as social media and websites are conventional media. This type of media was discovered before digital media existed. Conventional media can be categorized into two, namely print media and broadcast media. Print media refers to forms of media that use print technology to disseminate information. Some examples of print media include newspapers, magazines, and tabloids. Meanwhile, broadcast media is a type of media that transmits and presents information through broadcasts. Examples include television and radio. Based on several views from academic informants, it can be understood that UNM Public Relations in using conventional media has not fully reached the academic community. *Pinisi Magazine* which reaches certain groups and has inadequate information boards.

DISCUSSION

Credibility

Source credibility is the academic community's view of the credibility of the skills or competencies possessed by UNM Public Relations. It is known that as publicist, as an image builder, the skills or expertise they must have are verbal and non-verbal communication skills, writing skills, and the ability to build relationships. Based on the results of the interview, it was found that UNM Public Relations is believed to have knowledge and skills in public relations because the recruitment of UNM Public Relations employees is based on ability in the field of public relations and journalistic skills.

From the aspect of credibility of information published by UNM Public Relations, the academic community assesses that the information provided is valid and trustworthy. This can be seen from the position of Public Relations at Makassar State University which is structurally under the auspices of the Chancellor so that it is considered to have high integrity, which can give confidence to the public that they will not hide facts or manipulate information. Based on the results of researchers' observations, on the website managed by UNM Public Relations, namely unm.ac.id, all the information published is based on true events. Researchers observed that the information or news was published after the completion of campus activities or agendas. So it was found that the views of the academic community regarding the credibility of UNM Public Relations and the credibility of information were both effective.

Clarity

The Clarity Indicator means that the information published by UNM Public Relations is easy for readers to understand. This indicator includes the completeness of the structure of writing information in the news, and the use of language that is easy to understand and does not use many foreign terms. The results of interviews with informants showed indicators of clarity in the information conveyed because it used the

5W+1H news elements (what, where, when, why, who, and how). Apart from that, the language used by UNM Public Relations is well known, using standard and easy-to-understand language, and paying attention to writing rules according to EYD (Enhanced Spelling).

The writing technique commonly used is the inverted pyramid, where the lead or opening paragraph must summarize the facts in principle and answer the five questions "who, what, where, why, and when" (5W: who, what, where, why, and when). The most important information is placed at the top (news terrace), contains title, and content, and has complementary information. Thus, even though the story is cut, the main story still includes the essence of the complete news story because the less important parts are placed in the next paragraph. This is in line with the practices carried out by UNM Public Relations, which follows news writing patterns in accordance with journalistic standards.

Content

The Content indicator is the availability of information needed by the academic community. Content refers to information available through media or electronic products. Public relations needs to support all organizational activities that are beneficial to the public and be involved in these activities to build closeness with leaders, employees, and the internal and external public. This is not in accordance with the practice implemented by UNM Public Relations, where the activities of student organizations have not been thoroughly published by UNM Public Relations.

The results of interviews with informants show that the availability of information needed by the academic community is still lacking, this can be seen from the quantity of information presented which is less informative and educative, only containing information on the leadership's agenda. Meanwhile, information for the benefit of the community such as academic information, competitions, scholarships, and self-development is still minimal and not updated. Apart from that, the visual content published by UNM Public Relations is less interesting and varied. UNM Public Relations has also not optimized the management of the unnm.ac.id website because several sections are still empty and not updated. Such as the Student Rubric, Creativity Program, Entrepreneurship Program, PKM Results, Innovation Results, Grant and Research List, Scholarship, and Academic and Student Affairs List which are still empty. The University Service List rubric on the unnm.ac.id website has also not been updated, the data on this rubric is most recently 2019. The same thing happened to the Student Achievement rubric which was last updated based on 2020 data.

Continuitas and Consistency

Continuity and Consistency indicators are used to measure the consistency and sustainability of UNM Public Relations in processing information, and always updating information to the academic community. Consistency is used to measure informants' views on the consistency of UNM Public Relations in providing information. Consistency and sustainability in this case are actions that are carried out continuously and sustainably (continuously). Continuity and Consistency indicators are important aspects of the communication process. The continuity and consistency of UNM Public Relations in providing information to the academic community influences the positive reputation of the academic community.

The results of interviews with informants showed (1) UNM Public Relations lacks consistency in providing information on an ongoing basis (continuity). This can be seen from the views of the academic community who state that UNM Public Relations is still limited in providing information. The lack of productivity of UNM Public Relations shows that UNM Public Relations has not been consistent and has not been optimal in providing various information. Without information, someone involved in various organizations will be left behind by other organizations or groups.

Channel

In a university environment, small groups of the internal public can be more easily reached through digital technologies such as websites, social media, and instant messaging. Therefore, universities

having websites and social media are a must because through these networks all information can be easily accessed. Channels are the media used by UNM Public Relations to disseminate information. UNM Public Relations uses two types of communication media to disseminate information, namely digital media and conventional media. From the results of interviews with informants, UNM Public Relations in disseminating information on digital media such as Instagram and websites is still easily accessible to the community. However, they have not yet utilized existing features to attract audiences such as reels. In the current era, the internet has become an important need that must be met to obtain and disseminate information from children to adults. The dissemination of information today is highly dependent on internet connectivity, which in the era of advanced technology, allows individuals to be in different places simultaneously.

Based on the results of interviews, the use of conventional media such as magazines, letters, and information boards is less effective because Pinisi Magazine only contains information on activities and awards received by UNM to be shared with companies/offices, institutions, and faculties/study programs. This magazine is only published once every three months and only targets certain readers. Dissemination of information through information boards is inadequate and published information is not updated. For example, the information board used as an information channel for UNM Public Relations still displays old information.

Weaknesses and Inhibiting Factors

From the results of interviews with informants, it can be seen that the weakness of UNM Public Relations in disseminating information is that the website content is monotonous or not varied, and UNM Public Relations does not provide informative and educative information. The information on the website is not updated, that is, the condition of the website whose contents do not change and tends to remain the same from time to time, this is indicated by several sections on the website that are still empty. The information media used is still old school and does not follow technological developments and trends, UNM Public Relations does not utilize Instagram and other social media which can be a medium for disseminating information and campus promotion. Apart from that, the existence of UNM Public Relations is still lacking, so most students do not know the existence of UNM Public Relations.

From the results of interviews with the Sub Coordinator of Public Relations and Information Material Processing and Publication of UNM Public Relations, it can be seen that the factors inhibiting UNM Public Relations in providing information such as the lack of human resources who are skilled in graphic design so that the appearance of publications is still standard and less attractive. Publication media is still old school and there is no awareness and creativity to use channels (media) that are diverse and easily accessible to the public in accessing information and as campus promotional media.

CONCLUSION

In disseminating information to the academic community, the academic community believes that UNM Public Relations has the knowledge and skills capacity in the field of public relations, and the information published by UNM Public Relations can be trusted by the academic community so that the Credibility indicators are declared effective. The clarity component can be said to be effective because the academic community considers that public relations has provided information using simple and clear language or words that are easily understood by the public. UNM Public Relations has provided information to the academic community in terms of education or teaching, research, and service but it is still not updated, less creative, and has not met the information needs desired by the academic community, so the content presented by UNM Public Relations has not been effective. UNM Public Relations has not been effective in consistently providing information because it does not provide information on an ongoing basis. In terms of channel indicators, UNM Public Relations has not been optimal in providing various

media to provide information. This is because UNM Public Relations' human resources are still limited in utilizing existing media. Civitas assesses that the channel component is not yet effective because UNM public relations has not provided information using various media, and has not yet followed the development of social media as a medium for campus information and promotion, such as the visual appearance of content that is less attractive.

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