

Inhibiting Factors of Public Relations Role in Building a Harmonious Working Relationship at IAIN Parepare

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Abstract. *In an organization that regulates and controls the communication system is public relations. The aim is to form a good will, tolerance, mutual cooperation, mutual trust, mutual understanding, and mutual respect, and the right image based on the principles of harmonious relations, with the public. But in reality, internal conflicts are still found that cannot be well communicated by public relations that end in the disharmony. This study aims to describe the factors inhibiting the role of public relations in building harmonious work relationships in IAIN Parepare. To obtain an authentic understanding, this research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological approach. As the basic purpose of phenomenology to reduce the experience of individuals with a phenomenon into a universal essence description. The results of this study show: 1) IAIN Parepare is a government-owned educational institution, in general the government's public relations only acts as a provider of communication technician service, as the role of public relations contained in PMA number 35 of 2018 concerning IAIN Parepare Ortaker. 2) Human resources (HR) in the public relations field, both in quality and quantity are still very limited.*

Keywords: *Inhibiting Factors, Role, Public Relations, Employment, Harmonious, IAIN Parepare*

1. INTRODUCTION

Currently the development of the world, human curiosity and mindset have arrived at a more complex and complicated situation, this causes the human mind to always develop. The need to build cooperation is getting higher, especially to decide something, which is related to the interests of the crowd. A person is not allowed to decide only on the basis of his own desires. Ideas, ideas, thoughts, and attitudes, should be communicated with others with an interest in those issues. In order to accommodate diverse characters and interests, humans build and develop institutions, groups, and organizations. Institutions, groups, or organizations can be built based on types of interests, goals, or they can also be based on race, ethnicity, religion, and other ethnic groups.

Every organization is formed and developed based on certain goals to be achieved. Literally the organization can be interpreted as a guide of the interdependent parts of one another. Evert M. Rogers and Rekha Agarwala Rogers (1976) in their book, Communication in organization refer to these guidelines as 'systems'. The use of the word 'system' to approach the notion of organization is very appropriate, because the notion of system is a totality of subsets that relate and combine to achieve a certain goal. System also refers to parts that interact harmoniously, dynamically and definitely. In an organization that regulates and controls the communication function is Public Relations.

The daily activity of Public Relations is communication, which has the characteristic of two-way traffic communication. This activity starts from revamping the internal organization, to building the image of the institution. In relation to this role operatively, Public Relations is a special function of management. This shows that Public Relations is not a management tool that can be held, moved, or eliminated, because its function structure is attached to one with management. Simply put, where there is management there is Public Relations. And what drives Public Relations is communication. Public Relations helps maintain institutional rules through inward or outward communication channels, and Public Relations becomes a source of inward or outward communication. The goal is to achieve mutual understanding or cooperation between organizations / institutions and the public.

State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Parepare is an organization or government institution engaged in Islamic education. IAIN Parepare is the first university in Eastern Indonesia that is officially a Mikrotik Academy. As we all know that the target of IAIN Parepare in the future is to make this educational institution a leading Islamic university, with good governance institution and good academic culture. To realize this goal, of course, an ideal PR role is needed. The ideal role of Public Relations is intended in this research in accordance with the category of Dozier and Broom (1995).

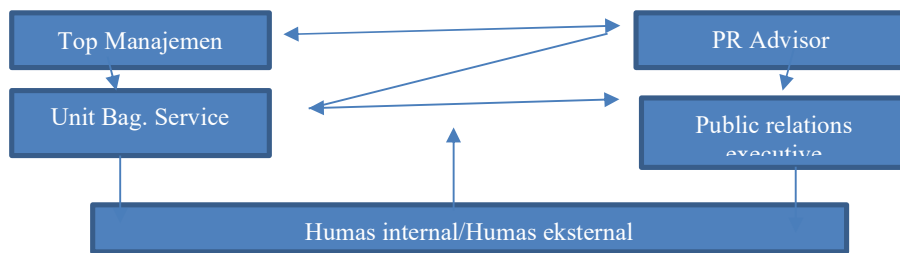
Research on the role of public relations in an organization has been widely conducted. Noui et al. (2012) examined the role of Public Relations in the development and promotion of public structures. Ishak (2012) on public relations practices in organizations. Lenka and Petra (2014) on the role of public relations in branding. Safitri (2013) about the role and ethics of public relations in organizations. Sumai and Naumi (2016) related to the image recovery strategy of STAIN Curup. Alma (2018), Utami (2019), Elyus and Sholeh (2021) further

examine the role of public relations in building a positive image. Prisca and Anna (2020) examined public relations practices in Zimbabwe. Lani and Handayani (2021) about the role of government public relations creating a good performance reputation. Patrick D. Thelen (2021) examines PR research trends in Latin America through quantitative content analysis of articles published in PR and other communication journals. Sumai, Iskandar, Hilmiyah (2022) sees the role of Public Relations in building harmonious working relationships at IAIN Parepare. However, among these various studies, no one has specifically explored the inhibiting factors of the role of Public Relations in building harmonious working relationships at IAIN Parepare.

Public relations is basically an abbreviation of the phrase of the word 'Public Relations'. The term Public Relations as a translation of the term public relations, which in Indonesia has become popular in the sense of the word has been widely used by institutions or organizations. Frank Jefkins in Haris Munandar translates the definition of Public Relations as something that summarizes the overall planned communication, both inward and outward, between an organization and all its audiences in order to achieve specific goals based on mutual understanding. Based on the definition of Public Relations put forward by Jefkins, a common thread can be drawn that, Public Relations is a planned and continuous communication activity both within the organization and outside the organization.

In principle, structurally, the function of Public Relations in the organization is an integral part and cannot be separated from an institution. This is in line with the opinion of Anne Van der Meiden (1987) in Tondowidjojo, that the public relations function can succeed optimally if it is directly under the leadership or has a direct relationship with the highest leadership in the institution concerned. The ideal position of Public Relations in the organizational structure is described as follows;

Figure 1.
Public Relations Position in Institutions



Refer to figure 1. above, it can be seen that the position of Public Relations is very important and strategic in every institution/organization it shelters. Because, a Public Relations is always at the forefront in maintaining a harmonious relationship with his public, both internal and external public, including when the institution is experiencing a crisis with its public. The position of Public Relations directly under the highest leadership will authorize Public Relations to participate in determining policies or providing input at the decision-making level within the institution. So that Public Relations has the same opportunity as other management to sit together in determining institutional policies.

According to Dozier, the role of Public Relations is categorized into 2 parts, namely; Manager role and technician role. Manager roles provide opportunities for PR practitioners in solving problems (expert advisors), advising other managers (communication facilitators), making decisions and policies, success/failure of PR programs (facilitators of problem solving processes). Unlike the technician role position, PR practitioners are used as technical communication, their duties are like the duties of journalists.

In the book *Effective Public Relations* there is a quote written that: Public relations people, if they are truly respected by management, will definitely be entitled to a "seat at the management table". Based on this quote, it is enough to explain that public relations is considered a serious thing because it has an important role, namely as a decision maker in institutions / organizations. In other words, the position of Public Relations in the organizational structure that is included in the management circle is directly adjacent to top management.

Unlike the technician role position, based on research conducted by PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) and IABC (International Association of Business Communicators) in the United States, public relations practitioners who tend to apply the technician role are not part of the inner circle of management. Its main role is to prepare communications that assist the implementation of PR policies made by other parties.

The development of Public Relations today, has not provided maximum results. Many are found in various organizations / institutions that still treat Public Relations as technical personnel, their duties such as providing a place for meeting meetings, arranging chairs, covering and disseminating news. Indeed, the duties and functions of Public Relations are not just technical personnel but become managerial strategies that can help management to

create public opinion for internal and external organizations that shelter it, through harmonious communication. so that Public Relations is not only a complement to the institutional organizational structure, as happened at IAIN Parepare.

Public relations at IAIN Parepare acts as a technician role, placed in a position not directly related to top management, in this case (Rector). As a result, the role of Public Relations as a manager role cannot be realized. Public relations has no hand in determining policies or providing input at the decision-making level. Public relations also cannot be said to be able to build harmonious relationships between internal publics; such as the relationship between subordinates and leaders, the relationship between employees and employees within the scope of IAIN Parepare itself.

This fact is clearly illustrated in the organizational structure and function of Public Relations at IAIN Parepare. Broadly speaking, the role of Public Relations at IAIN Parepare is as follows; Carry out socialization and promotion programs for institutions, provide information and news services about institutions to the wider community, and carry out documentation of institutional activities. This task makes Public Relations at IAIN Parepare act as a journalist in organization that only provides technical communication services. Technician role, making Public Relations at IAIN Parepare unable to carry out its ideal role in building harmonious working relationships through two-way communications. Both Public Relations as a source of information and Public Relations as a channel of information for the public.

In the field, there are still internal conflicts that cannot be communicated properly by Public Relations, such as; Uneven teaching hours of lecturers, institutional rules that are often violated, scientific meetings become unscientific meetings, demonstrations, and so on that end in disharmony. Usually things like this start from small and interpersonal problems, then become big and group problems. Departing from the explanation above, it is interesting to investigate further related to the inhibiting factors of the role of Public Relations in building harmonious working relationships at IAIN Parepare.

2. METHOD

This research study uses qualitative methods with a phenomenological approach. The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to describe the inhibiting factors of the role of Public Relations in building harmonious working relationships at IAIN Parepare. As the basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce an individual's experience with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (Creswell, & Poth, 2018). The informants in this study were 11 people, consisting of; Head of the IAIN Parepare AUAK Bureau 1 person, IAIN Parepare internal supervision unit 1 person, Dean of IAIN Parepare 2 people, senate representatives 2 people, and IAIN Parepare lecturer representatives 4 people, cooperation and public relations subdivision 1 person, The instrument used in this study is the researcher himself, because qualitative research methods cannot be separated from observation and the participation of researchers who determine the overall scenario. In qualitative research, researchers act as planners, implementers of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and as reporters of research results. So that researchers are said to be the main instrument (key instrument) of all stages of research.

The data collection techniques carried out in this study are: a) In-depth interviews. Qualitative research interviews as an attempt to understand the world from the point of view of the subject, to uncover the meaning of their experiences. The interview conducted in this study is an in-depth interview, because that way researchers will get the information needed in compiling research. b) Observation. Observations or field data are what the researcher observes, and what is recorded in the field notes and becomes material for systematic analysis. c) Documentation Studies. This technique is used to obtain data and information needed in this research by means of literature studies of books and other relevant documents.

Data analysis involves three stages; First, data reduction is to summarize, choose the main things, focus on important things that are in accordance with the research topic. Second, the presentation of data, through the presentation of the data, the data can be organized appropriately so that it is easy to understand. The final step in analyzing qualitative research is drawing conclusions. The conclusion is a new finding that was previously still unclear, so after research it becomes clear.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before we further describe the findings in the field about the factors that hinder the role and task of Public Relations in building harmonious work at IAIN Parepare, we first explain the history of the development of Public Relations in Indonesia. Why do we do this? In order to create the same perception in understanding one of the roles of Public Relations in an organization / institution.

Public relations in Indonesia began to be implemented formally and well organized since the 1950s. History records the first Public Relations organization established in the state petroleum company (Pertamina). The role of the Hupmas division (Government and community relations) is quite important in an effort to establish mutual communication relationships with clients, business relations, private companies and other communities. The forerunner of the formation of Public Relations in Indonesia was officially born through the President of PM Juanda's Cabinet, which instructed that every government agency must form a Public Relations section.

In 1967 coordination was established between public relations departments / state institutions abbreviated as Bakor which ex officio was led by the leadership of each department. Then in 1971, Bakor was changed to Bako-Humas (Government Public Relations Coordinating Board) through Menpen Decree No. 31 / Kep / Menpen / year 1971. Bako-Public Relations as a formal institution within the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Indonesia. In this period it was known as government service Public Relations.

Period III was marked by the presence of Perhumas (Indonesian Public Relations Association) on December 15, 1972 by private and government practitioners. Furthermore, on April 10, 1987, another Public Relations professional forum was formed called APPRI (Association of Public Relations Companies). With the aim of forming a professional forum in the form of an independent public relations company organization (public relations service consultants). Period IV, starting from 1995 until now, public relations developed among private professionals specifically (PR / Public Relations specialization in the service industry), both nationally and internationally. How is the relationship between the history of the development of Public Relations in Indonesia and the inhibiting factors of the role and duties of Public Relations in building working relationships at IAIN Parepare?

Based on the history of the development of Public Relations in Indonesia, there is a very close relationship with the inhibiting factors of the role and duties of Public Relations in building harmonious working relationships at IAIN Parepare. It must be understood that IAIN Parepare is an educational institution under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In other words, IAIN Parepare is a government-owned institution. The roles and duties of Public Relations in government are of course different from the roles and duties of non-government Public Relations (commercial institutions).

One of the duties of government public relations emphasized in Menpen Decree No. 31/1971 is to plan and implement public relations activities in accordance with government policy. This means that the role and duties of Public Relations at IAIN Parepare must be in accordance with the provisions set by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia as stated in PMA number 35 of 2018 concerning Ortaker IAIN Parepare, as stated I 12 below;

"Based on PMA number 35 of 2018 concerning Ortaker IAIN Parepare, the Subdivision of Cooperation and Public Relations has 4 duties and functions, namely; a). Cooperation, b). Public Relations, c). Documentation, d). Publications".¹

Referring to PMA number 35 of 2018 concerning Ortaker IAIN Parepare stipulates that the role and duties of Public Relations at IAIN Parepare emphasize more on the role as a communication technical, not as a communication facilitator. The task of Public Relations is only to provide communication technician services such as; carry out coverage and news on campus, make documentation of leadership activities, manage institute magazines, carry out press conferences and press release processes, manage web sites, manage social media, and so on that are informational and documentation as recognized by I 6 below:

"The task of Public Relations is to convey information to the campus community regarding information on campus".²

The task of Public Relations as a provider of technical communication services must be able to act as a *gatekeeper*. *Gatekeeper* or goalkeeper is a person or group in an institution whose job is to select information, starting from newly obtained data, the process of processing information, and finally the selection process before being disseminated to the public. Public relations at IAIN Parepare in this case are considered capable of becoming *gatekeepers*, as stated by I 8, as follows:

"For example, when one of the newspaper media raises negative news related to campus, this is where the role of public relations takes a policy whether the news needs to be countered or not, besides that public relations must be able to choose news that is suitable for consumption by the public".³

The role of Public Relations as a communication technician has contributed positively to IAIN Parepare, but its performance needs to be improved, so that the information needed by the internal public can be known immediately. The following is the narrative of I 2 and I 1, who expect that the performance of Public Relations at IAIN Parepare needs to be improved again;

"Public relations communication is quite good but still needs to be improved because there are still some campus information that is not spread thoroughly and seems late, for example some news of activities that are always late so that campus residents are sometimes not ready to participate in these activities".⁴

¹ Interview with Suherman, on July 5, 2021

² Interview with Muliati, on August 3, 2021

³ Interview with Qadaruddin, on August 12, 2021

⁴ Interview with Zulfa, on July 26, 2021

"Of course, a lot has been done by Public Relations, for example, information about new student admissions has become the task of Public Relations to socialize, then student activities, lecturer activities, even institutional activities have been published all. But indeed if we want to see of course there are still many activities that they should convey, they socialize so that all information that should be published must all be centralized in Public Relations. But each of them I see that there are still those who go their own way. It certainly still needs to be empowered as much as possible".⁵

In carrying out the duties and roles of Public Relations at IAIN Parepare, of course, there are obstacles that hinder the implementation of the program. This inhibiting factor comes from limited human resources, both in terms of quantity and quality. This is recognized by I 12 and I 9, following;

"HR is one of the challenges both in terms of quantity and quality".⁶

"... People who are placed in Public Relations should be people who understand about Public Relations work, if there is education now, it is called Public Relations education, so how can the knowledge be used and applied. While at IAIN Parepare it may be due to limited human resources so that the determination of public relations is taken not in accordance with its recruitment and designation...."⁷

Professionalism in public relations is the main key in carrying out duties, for that competency standards are needed for anyone assigned to the position as a good work culture. The success of the role of Public Relations, both its function as technical communication management and as a professional manager, of course, must be supported by elements of resources owned by the institution. The elements of these resources are called 6-M, namely human resources (*Men*), material resources / goods controlled (*Material*), tools or tools of production machines owned (*Machine*), financial capabilities (*Money*), methods used (*Method*), and marketing aimed at (*Market*). Human Resources (Human Resources) with competent capacity in the field of public relations and equipped with adequate facilities and infrastructure are certainly able to bring better changes to the achievement of IAIN Parepare targets in the future.

4. CONCLUSION

The factors that hinder the role of Public Relations in building harmonious working relationships at IAIN Parepare can be described as follows: First, as a government-owned educational institution, the role of government Public Relations generally only acts as a communication technician service provider, in accordance with the role of Public Relations listed in PMA number 35 of 2018 concerning Ortaker IAIN Parepare. Second, the limitations of Human Resources (HR) in the field of public relations, both in terms of quality and quantity, are still very limited. To overcome this obstacle, several suggestions can be put forward. First, the placement of Public Relations as managers with structural roles adjacent to top leadership. With this position, Public Relations can assist leaders in solving problems, advise leaders, and act as facilitators in the problem-solving process. Second, IAIN Parepare requires professional and skilled PR practitioners in their fields, who are able to bring better changes in achieving IAIN Parepare's goals in the future. With these steps, it is hoped that the role of Public Relations can be strengthened and more effective in building harmonious working relationships in the institution.

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⁵ Interview with Muzakkir, on August 6, 2021

⁶ Interview with Suherman, on August 20, 2021

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