



Utilization Public Relations Fanpage of the Governor of North Sumatra in Increasing Public Awareness and Participation

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ABSTRACT

Technological developments can not only help to communicate but can also help in disseminating information to the public. Through the delivery of information, we can see the response of the people who receive it. Utilizing the development of communication technology makes it easier to convey information so that it can increase awareness and invite people to participate through social media. This research was conducted to increase public awareness and participation in information notifications provided by the Public Relations of the Governor of North Sumatra through Fanpage. The research method used was a quantitative descriptive study conducted in 3 regions, namely Deli Serdang Regency, Medan City and Binjai City (Mebidang). This study in determining the sample using purposive sampling technique by using a sample quota of 100 respondents at each research location so that the total number of respondents was 300 respondents. The results showed that the people of North Sumatra responded quite well to information on North Sumatra government activities delivered through Fanpage and the content of the message was able to increase public awareness and participation in development programs. The community provided input so that more diverse information about development programs carried out by the North Sumatra government and the message content was not monotonous.

INTRODUCTION

Social media is one of the platforms most widely used by people today. The presence of social media opens up space for social interaction increasingly rapidly in cyberspace (Dalimunthe, 2018). The development of information technology innovation gives people the freedom to voice their thoughts that were previously unheard of. As developments occur, the number of users of various social media increases and makes social media a means for each individual to say various things and carry out their own interests (Winoto & Putra, 2022). Social media, which is full of interests, has become a new force that can help spread information quickly via the internet based on digital messages (Ritonga et al., 2023).

Technological sophistication increasingly enables people to get what they want, including in the dissemination of government information, especially public relations which plays the role of a mouthpiece in conveying all information to the public (Rambe et al., 2023). Social media is a weapon that has a role in encouraging people to have goodwill towards a person, institution or company. Apart from conveying information, social media can be used to monitor issues developing in society.

In the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 13 of 2011, it is stated that the Public Relations Institute of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Regional Government, hereinafter referred to as the Public Relations Institute, is an organizational unit within a government agency that carries out communication and information management functions as well as public relations tasks. In the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation, in Article 3 Paragraph 1 Points a-e, it is stated that public relations personnel have the task of providing information to the public regarding government policies, programs and activities. Public relations is also the manager of information that will be communicated to the public quickly, precisely, accurately, proportionally and interestingly, in line with the dynamics of society. Public relations is tasked with conveying information related to government policies, programs and activities completely, completely, precisely and correctly to the public. Public relations also provides an understanding of the common vision, mission and perception between the community and the government and accommodates public aspirations as input in evaluating government policies, programs and activities.

Lewis (2017) states, Public Relations in government functions to help explain and achieve the goals of government programs, increase the government's responsive attitude, and provide the public with sufficient information to be able to carry out self-regulation. So, it can be interpreted that public relations is tasked with conveying to the public all policies and services through various media. The aim is to convey information and ultimately have a positive image of the government accepted and approved by the public (Ritonga, 2022).

What Public Relations does in utilizing social media to disseminate information must have careful planning. There are several sections tasked with designing communication strategies with the media, designing message delivery strategies and making program plans for managing social media accounts. This includes identifying what social media platforms are familiar to the public and making a list of Human Resource assets owned such as Photographers, Videographers, Writers and experts.

The GUBSU Public Relations Fanpage has 4 social media which are used to provide information to the public. These social media are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. Each of these social media has a large number of followers. Facebook with 30,903, Instagram 27,961, Twitter 1,392, and YouTube with 69,400 followers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research conducted by Heri Juandayang came from the Postgraduate Islamic Communication and Broadcasting at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh entitled Social Media as the Dissemination of Aceh Government Information (2017). Social media is one of the platforms most widely used by people today. The presence of social media opens up space for social interaction increasingly rapidly in cyberspace. The Public Relations and Protocol Bureau of the Aceh Regional Secretariat has an important role in disseminating government information to the public. This paper discusses how Aceh Government Public Relations utilizes social media to disseminate information on government activities using qualitative descriptive methods with a content analysis approach. The results of the study show that in disseminating information to the public, Aceh Government Public Relations has utilized social media in the form of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube to broadcast government information. The information broadcast gets a response and forms a positive image for the government.

The next research was carried out by Mannan and Mutmainnah (2017) from Communication Sciences, Alauddin State Islamic University, Makassar. This research is entitled Public Relations Activities in the Complaints Sector of the Makassar City Government in Improving the Image of Government. The aim of this research is to determine public relations (PR) activities in the field of complaints in the city of Makassar in improving the government's image and to find out the supporting and inhibiting factors for public relations activities in the field of public complaints. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach method. Data collection methods were carried out by observation, interviews and library research. The research results show that public complaints are part of PR. Public Relations activities whose support is to receive complaints every day from print media, social media, online SMS, telephone and old complaints. Each complaint is followed up by the relevant SKPD responsible. Furthermore, the supporting factors in this research are in the field of press room complaints, creating complaint posts and inhibiting factors in the field of complaints about facilities and infrastructure, human resources and coordination. The implication of this research is that it is necessary to increase socialization of the

implementation of government service programs so that the public will not lose trust in government institutions.

Research conducted by Izzati et al (2018) comes from the Faculty of Technology and Communication, Sepuluh November, Surabaya. This research is entitled *Categorization of Types of Government and Community Interaction and Popularity of Regional Government Social Media (2018)*. The success of policies and programs proposed by the government depends on effective communication factors. Social media applications are an alternative communication medium between the government and society. Social media can providing two-way interaction between society and government. The government currently has a mission in using social media, namely, carrying out one way push, two way pull interactions and network co-design of service. This research aims to analyze this type of interaction and determine the popularity of government social media, in this case in the form of local government Facebook fan pages. The results of this research show that the level of popularity of local government Facebook fan pages is relatively low, namely, as many as 79% are classified as unpopular. This is also related to the type of interaction that occurs, as evidenced by the low level of participation and collaboration between the community and the government.

METHODOLOGY

A scientific research can be justified if it uses a method that is appropriate to the research study. Research methods are a way to search for truth scientifically based on appropriate and accountable data. A research paradigm is a framework of thinking that explains how researchers view the facts of social life and researchers' treatment of science or theory. In general, research approaches or often also called research paradigms that are quite dominant are qualitative, quantitative and mixed research paradigms (a combination of qualitative and quantitative). In terms of terminology, experts seem to use different terms or names even though they refer to the same thing (Noor, 2016).

The research method is a scientific way to obtain valid data with the aim of being discovered, developed and proven. This research uses quantitative research using descriptive study methods. Quantitative Research is research that aims to describe existing and ongoing phenomena at the present or past stages of development (Hamdi, 2014). The descriptive study method is research that attempts to describe symptoms, events and occurrences that are occurring at the present time where the researcher tries to photograph events and occurrences that are the center of attention and then describe them as they really are.

Researchers use triangulation techniques as a technique to check the validity of the data. Where in its meaning, triangulation is a technique for checking the validity of data that utilizes something else in comparing interview results with research objects (Moloeng, 2010). Triangulation can be carried out using different techniques (Nasution, 2009), namely interviews, observations and documents. Apart from being used to check the correctness of the data, this triangulation is also used to enrich the data. According to Nasution, apart from that, triangulation can also be useful for investigating the validity of researchers' interpretations of data, because triangulation is reflective.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research, which was carried out for approximately six (6) months, began with observing the research location and obtaining a research permit. This was followed by preparing the questionnaire and testing the reliability of the questionnaire. After the questionnaire was deemed to meet the methodological requirements for distribution to respondents, the questionnaire was distributed via Google Form to the public. by selecting respondents using purposive sampling in 3 (three) locations, namely Medan city, Binjai city and Deli Serdang district, with the criteria of knowing about the Governor of North Sumatra's Public Relations Fanpage and following the information conveyed through the Fanpage.

From the results of the interview obtained with the Head of Public Relations, the Governor of North Sumatra said that by utilizing the current digital era, it makes it easier for the public to obtain information. The large number of people who are also increasingly advanced and developing technology means that the reach of information that is accessible is also wider, not only in the Medan area but also in other areas such as Binjai and Deli Serdang.

"In my opinion, how can the dissemination of information reach the wider community because there are already many advanced and developing communities. Nowadays, many people use smartphones, especially those who use social media. "The use of existing social media is also used to provide information to the public which we then package in interesting and easy to understand reading."

However, the role of existing technological developments also helps in conveying information to the public. Next, how to package the existing information so that people are interested in reading it. Most people are looking for information that is currently hot, such as health information, because currently Indonesia and the world are facing the Covid19 pandemic. Using social media to disseminate information and distribute news links to the GUBSU Public Relations Fanpage is also a strategy to make people aware and attract the public to read information.

When discussing how to increase public awareness and participation in finding out information, you must also know what information needs exist in society. This is to see whether there is public feedback that occurs after reading the news. When feedback is seen, it means that people have responded to the news and information they have read.

Technological advances are increasingly developing, making people increasingly use social media to search for information. Attractive news packaging is also one way for PR to make people interested in reading the news. Raising hot issues for the public to know about. This feedback will be visible when the public responds and participates in the news that has been prepared for the public. "To package news, you need a strategy for packaging interesting news, so that people are interested in reading the news that has been published. "Apart from that, we also highlight news that is viral and happening in society so that they are also interested in the news we produce (Rubino et al., 2023)."

From this it can be seen that when we package the news better it will make people more interested so that feedback will emerge from people who have read and seen the news. Therefore, it is necessary for public relations to follow developments in existing news and how to design news so that the public is interested in reading it.

We can see that in the digital era and technological developments, many mothers also use social media to find out information. The information you are looking for is not only about problems with famous artists but also very important information to know about education, the environment and health.

The PKK Association also provides many directions to mothers to use smartphones well and look for information that can have a positive impact. The instructions in question also prevent mothers from getting incorrect information with wrong news or hoax news. Therefore, notification is needed so that mothers can be interested in finding out the news and participating in news reading activities so that they do not get the wrong information.

We can see from the explanation above that there are still many mothers who need guidance on using social media as a source of information and how mothers can avoid getting the wrong information. To avoid people receiving wrong information, education and outreach regarding trusted news sources is needed, especially in small areas where media literacy is still minimal.

After conducting research by distributing questionnaires, the results were that in the city of MEBIDANG (Medan, Binjai and Deli Serdang) many people agreed with the information from the GUBSU PR Fanpage. In the results found, most of the respondents chose to look for information related to economic and health issues, this was encouraged because of the Corona pandemic problem which caused the public to become more alert regarding health and economic news. The MEBIDANG community agrees and is helped by the information shared by the GUBSU Public Relations Fanpage, so that it can make it easier for the public to find information related to developments in development, education, economics and health in the city of Medan.

Table 1. The Most Searched Information on the North Sumatra Fanpage

Variable	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Development	24	24%
Education	7	7%
Economic	35	35%
Health	34	34%
Total	100	100%

In the city of Medan, there were results that as many as 81 respondents chose to agree to the question. The GUBSU PR Fanpage makes it easier for the public to get the information they need regarding development. It can be seen that there are still many people who care and see how the news about North Sumatra's development is progressing through the GUBSU's Public Relations

Fanpage. Many people agree and are helped by the GUBSU PR Fanpage, many people want to find out information and find it easy to find the information they need.

The results in the city of Binjai were that most of the respondents chose to find out and follow news regarding developments in development on the GUBSU Public Relations Fanpage. Many people are interested in the developments carried out by the government at the beginning of 2019, but in 2020, many developments were hampered by the corona pandemic that is currently occurring in Indonesia (Irwan et al., 2023). This results in obstacles to several developments in Indonesia. We can see that in the research results of 100 respondents who filled out the questionnaire, 86 respondents chose to agree that the GUBSU PR Fanpage makes it easier for the public to find out information about health developments in North Sumatra. From this we can see that the news information that the public is currently looking for is about health issues.

In the results in the city of Deli Serdang, there were 87 respondents out of 100 respondents who were given a questionnaire stating that the educational information contained on the governor's PR Fanpage was useful for the community in the midst of the corona pandemic. This makes people find out how the education process will continue after the corona pandemic occurred in early 2020. The corona pandemic that attacked Indonesia had a significant impact on several large cities in North Sumatra. The public wants to find out how the education process will continue in the midst of the corona pandemic.

After triangulating data in the field, it was found that the strategy used to attract public awareness and participation in finding out the news, the GUBSU Public Relations carried out by making the news easier to read through distribution on social media. Next, very factual and new reporting is carried out so that the public can get the information they need easily and quickly through the GUBSU PR Fanpage. The news published is also made so that it is interesting and easy to access for the public, in order to attract people to participate in reading and help spread the information obtained by using links on their social media.

Not only by packaging interesting news, it is necessary to disseminate information to the public to avoid news that is not true and traps the public or what is usually called hoax news. The outreach carried out to mothers is also useful in directing mothers to read news from trusted sources, so as to avoid misinformation or hoax news. It is hoped that the information that the public gets from GUBSU Public Relations can help people who need information and avoid hoax news.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The use of the North Sumatra Governor's Public Relations Fanpage in increasing public awareness of regional development programs is good and increasing, this can be seen in the results of research conducted by the public who strongly agree and are interested in seeking information through the GUBSU's Public Relations Fanpage. The use of the North Sumatra Governor's Public Relations Fanpage has been quite good in increasing public participation in development programs, this can be seen in the results of the research carried out which showed that many people agreed to participate using the GUBSU's Public Relations Fanpage to search for the information they needed. From the results of the research conducted, it can be seen that the factors that can increase the awareness and participation of the people of North Sumatra towards development programs are the situation and conditions, one of which is the current Corona outbreak situation, encouraging people to use social media to search for know the current developments in health, education and development conditions.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

In writing this article the researcher realizes that there are still many shortcomings in terms of language, writing, and form of presentation considering the limited knowledge and abilities of the researchers themselves. Therefore, for the perfection of the article, the researcher expects constructive criticism and suggestions from various parties.

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