



THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY LAMPUNG IN INCREASING A POSITIVE IMAGE

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Abstract. The educational institutions basically need Public Relations which aims to gain goodwill, trust, mutual understanding and a good image from the public. Increased competition among tertiary institutions makes each tertiary institution challenged to form a positive image to the public. Prospective students will have a special interest in campuses that have a positive image. The problem in this research is what is the role Public Relations Muhammadiyah University of Lampung in Improving Positive Image. The research methodology is a qualitative constructivism approach with the case study method which is carried out in its entirety, comprehensively and in depth using a variety of data sources. The results of the research show that there are four main roles required of a Public Relations namely, as Communicator, Public Relations Communicate intensively through media and community groups, Relations, Public Relations capabilities building positive relationships between institutions represented and internal and external public, backup management, carry out management support or support departmental activities other in tertiary institutions for the creation of common goals, good image makers, create positive college image and publicity.

Keywords: Positive Image; Public Relations; Role

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

At this time the competition between College is getting tougher. This competition has both positive and negative impacts. Positive impacts arise when the tertiary institution anticipates this competition by improving quality and service (service of excellent), while negative impacts arise when the tertiary institution only selling the institution without paying attention to its quality but competing to get a lot of students.

This demand for quality improvement in addition to coming from the academic community as part of the organization (internal public) also come from the community (external public).

From the public as a client who have demands to be able to improve the quality of teaching that can produce quality graduates who are able to face competition in the globalization era, while from the public as partners, demands come to improve the quality of research results and the quality of

community service that is able to answer development problems and challenges.

The duties, functions and responsibilities of Higher Education institutions have been formulated in the Tridharma of Higher Education, which consists of the functions of teaching, research and community service. In carrying out these three Dharma, higher education requires interaction with the public as clients and partners. In facing an era of intense competition, higher education institutions need to make internal improvements, including through increasing communication between the academic community to produce efficiency and effectiveness in the management of higher education. demands that arise in society.

Public Relations activities are essentially communication activities, but different from other communication activities. The essential feature of communication in Public Relations is reciprocal communication. This reciprocal communication is very important and absolutely must exist in Public Relations activities. Creating feedback is a key principle in Public Relations.

Educational institutions basically need Public Relations. For this reason, a Public Relations is needed which aims to gain goodwill, trust, mutual understanding and a good image from the public. The goal of Public Relations is to create positive public opinion, benefiting all parties. Public Relations is a very important element in management in order to create specific goals of higher education.

1.2. Literature review

Public Relations is needed by every tertiary institution, because the purpose of Public Relations for tertiary institutions is how to form and enhance a positive image for the tertiary institution. A positive image is the image of a tertiary institution as a whole

because it is not only the image of its service products, but also based on the knowledge and experience of each tertiary institution, both positive and negative.

Recently, the role and strategic function of Public Relations in tertiary institutions have received increasing attention, especially to support the creation of a harmonious communication system between tertiary institutions and various parties, such as the community and increasing the positive existence of tertiary institutions. The increase in roles and functions is partly due to conditions of increasingly fierce competition and the movement of activities that lead to globalization. This is where the importance of image formation and improvement lies and the main reason why Public Relations is needed for universities.

Image is perceptions, impressions, feelings and images of the public towards something. Public perception of a tertiary institution is based on what they know or think about the tertiary institution in question. Because image is in the minds of the public, one of the things that must be done by universities is to take care not to, for various reasons, the majority of the public have the wrong perception about higher education institutions, giving rise to a negative image.

In line with the increase in roles and functions, the recruitment of higher education Public Relations staff must be selective. In order to be able to communicate what and how a university is understood correctly by the public, it takes Public Relations who have the ability to communicate the message of the institution in order to create public awareness and reduce the risk of misunderstanding and other negative impacts. Public Relations must be good at choosing and packaging existing information so that it has value in the eyes of the public. Public Relations is required to be able to design communication programs and use various media and means chosen

according to the purpose of communication and the target audience. Not only that, Public Relations must also be able to evaluate news coverage that affects image and have expertise in issue management. Higher Education Public Relations must have a clear understanding of the public relations issues faced by the institution, so that the main mission of Public Relations Higher Education to build a positive image, foster synergistic communication between Higher Education and the community and build institutions that are responsive to community dynamics can be realized.

Muhammadiyah University of Lampung, which is later shortened to UM Lampung, is one of the private universities in Lampung Province that organizes education, the more quality the university, the more students register, with the increasing number of students at the Muhammadiyah University of Lampung, good management is needed for internal and external in the environment of Muhammadiyah University of Lampung, for this reason the role of Public Relations is needed to be able to become a mediator or bridge for interests - the interests of the academic community so as to enhance the positive image of the University of Muhammadiyah Lampung.

Based on phenomena in the field, it is known that the role of Public Relations at Muhammadiyah University of Lampung has not run optimally, because Public Relations is still considered as a complement in management only, the role of Public Relations has not shifted from technical tasks such as protocol, photography, dealing with journalists, answering news, clipping newspapers, therefore serious attention is needed from the leadership of the University of Muhammadiyah Lampung to improve and give a role to Public Relations so that it can carry out its role as fully as possible.

II. METHODS

This study uses a type of qualitative research. The use of qualitative methods with consideration of this research seeks to gain clarity and understand the role of Public Relations UM Lampung in improving the image, researchers were actively involved in conducting interviews with key informants. Researchers triangulated the data by conducting interviews with the Chancellor of UML, Head of Public Relations of UM Lampung, employees UM Lampung, UM Lampung lecturers and UM Lampung students.

The research method used is a case study research method, While the paradigm in this study is constructivism, namely research that is constructed based on social experience, is local, and specific and depends on the party conducting it. On the basis of this view, the researcher is an observer of the object under study Agus salim (2006).

Data collection in this study used observation, documentation and interviews, and data analysis techniques through data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Results

Public relations or public relations as a structural management tool is an integral part of an organization/company, including universities, plays a very significant role and its contribution also determines the success of an organization/company in achieving a common vision, mission and goals. Public relations has a role to play in helping organizations determine not only what to say, but also what to do.

To be able to carry out its role as a good public relations officer, it is necessary and very important for a public relations person

to understand the concept of public relations itself. It can be understood that to become a Public Relations person one must have extensive relationships, both internally and externally, and must be able to establish communication. The ability to communicate for a Public Relations is very important. This communication can be done in oral or written form. In oral form, that is, he must be able to speak in public, must be able to do it presentations, able to interview in an effort to collect facts and data, and interviewed by the press or journalists as a source of news and other oral communication skills.

Furthermore, a Public Relations must also have the ability to get along or build relationships. Everyone who has a Public Relations profession must always expand his network or networking so that he can expedite his duties as a Public Relations official. Personal Approaching (personal approach) must be done by a Public Relations profession, although still in the corridor of maintaining the integrity of their respective professions.

From the results of the research conducted, it can be said that the role of public relations at Muhammadiyah University is not optimal. If referring to the theory of Public Relations which includes the role of public relations from Ruslan (2010) there are four main roles required of Public Relations officers namely first; as Communicator, as spokesperson for the organization, Public Relations Communicate intensively through media and community groups. Almost all communication techniques between personal (interpersonal communication) is used, oral communication, face-to-face communication as a mediator or persuasive.

Next is the second public relations role is a relationship. Public Relations Capability building positive relationships between institutions represented and the internal and external public. Relationships that don't

harmony risks causing public discontent which in the end threaten the continuity of the company's business. Apart from that, relationships too seeks to create mutual understanding, trust, support.

The third role of public relations is Backup Management. Carry out management support or support the activities of other departments within the company such as marketing, operations, engineering, finance, and personnel for the creation of common goals in an organization framework of the main objectives of the company or organization.

The fourth role of public relations is Good image maker creating a positive corporate image and publicity is an achievement, reputation and at the same time become the main goal for Public Relations activities in carrying out public relations management to build the image of the organization or company.

Furthermore, to become a public relations person, skills are needed, including communication. In his work, a public relations person will often be in contact with many new people, such as clients, business partners, or other organizational teams. To establish good relationships or relationships between important people, good communication will be very necessary. Language, language differences in communication can be a big obstacle. In expressing something between the communicant and the communicator must understand each other's intentions. The difficulty of understanding different languages is something that greatly complicates the delivery of messages and information.

Research Skills, a Public Relations need to convey information and factual data that has evidence and has been researched. Therefore, to get factual data, a public relations person needs to research and check the correctness of the information or data that

will be conveyed to other people. The truth of the information or data conveyed will affect the reputation of a public relations person or the company that oversees it.

Building Relationships, one of the tasks of a Public Relations is to build a relationship between jobs, businesses, or groups. Relationship building skills will be the main weapon of a public relations.

Writing Ability, a Public Relations is required to be able to summarize, compose and organize words into a good sentence. The goal is that the message or information to be conveyed is in accordance with the intended purpose. Writing skills are needed in order to be able to arrange words and sentences that are neat, structured, and easy to remember.

Negotiating, negotiating skills become a valuable skill for a public relations. They will deal with clients, divisional teams in one company, or fellow Public Relations people in different companies. Negotiation skills are needed to find a way out for an obstacle or problem, and to reach a mutual agreement.

Furthermore, the duties of a Public Relations officer are not limited to promotion, but more broadly the duties of public relations are: to carry out strategic planning regarding publications and campaigns, writing and producing presentations and press releases, answer and explain questions from the public, press and related organizations, organize promotional events such as press conferences, open days, exhibitions, tours and visits, speak openly at interviews, press conferences and presentations, provide and provide information data about opportunities new promotions and campaigns Public Relations to clients, analyzing media coverage, commissioning or conducting relevant market research, Liaising with clients, managerial and journalistic staff, design, write and/or produce presentations, press releases, articles, leaflets, journals, reports,

publicity brochures, information for websites and videos promotion.

To understand and solve problems that exist in the environment, a Public Relations practitioner must have stages in carrying out his activities. According to Cutlip and Center in Ruslan (2010), there are four processes of Public Relations. The process is dynamic, so that every existing element is continuous. The four processes are:

Research

A Public Relations practitioner must recognize the symptoms and causes of problems. Therefore, Public Relations practitioners need to involve themselves in research in gathering facts. He needs to monitor and read about the understandings, opinions, attitudes, and behavior of people who are interested in and affected by the company's actions. "What's happening now?" are the words that describe this stage.

Planning

After the research and data collection stages, Public Relations practitioners proceed to the planning stage. In this stage, Public Relations practitioners do the preparation of the problem. He does the thinking to solve the problem and determine the people who will work on the problem later. This planning should not be ignored, but must be thought through carefully because it also determines the success of the Public Relations work as a whole. Planning is prepared based on data and facts that have been obtained, not based on the wishes of Public Relations. Based on the formulation of the problem, a planning and decision-making strategy is created to create a work program based on institutional policies that are also adapted to the public interest. The keywords of this stage are, "What should we do and why?".

Action And Communication

Communication is often done based on personal assumptions by a Public Relations practitioner. As a result, these actions

sometimes bring bad results and are not recommended because they will put the company's image at risk. This stage is skipped to get the answer to the question, "How do we do it and say it" Specific objectives and objectives must be linked to achieving the actions and communications that will be carried out by Public Relations practitioners. He must be able to communicate the implementation of the program so that it can influence the attitude of the public which then encourages them to support the implementation of the program.

Evaluation

The way to find out whether the process has been completed or not is to evaluate the steps that have been taken.

The main purpose of evaluation is to measure the overall effectiveness of the process. At this stage, he is also required to be thorough and thorough for the accuracy of existing data and facts. However, keep in mind that a public relations practitioner's middle name is 'crisis'. Therefore, after solving one problem, it is possible to face new problems again.

3.2. Research Discussion

Public relations practitioners are constantly faced with challenges and must deal with all kinds of true facts, regardless of whether they are black, white or gray. The development of communication makes it no longer possible for an organization to cover up a fact. Therefore, public relations personnel are now much more required to be able to make other people understand a message, in order to maintain the reputation or image of the institution they represent.

Therefore public relations for UM Lampung must have a clear work program, both short term and long term, so that the public relations program is more interesting, creative and innovative so that UM Lampung can be better known by the public.

To achieve a positive image, it can refer to the indicators and image dimensions (Sari, 2012) which form the basis for the formation of corporate image, namely: Personality, the overall characteristics of the company that are understood by the target public such as companies that can be trusted, companies that have social responsibility, reputation, rights that have been exercised by the company and believed by the target public based on their own experience and that of other parties, Values, the values of a company, in other words, corporate culture such as a management attitude that cares about customers, employees who are quick to respond to customer requests and complaints, identity company, components that make it easier for the target public to recognize the company such as logos, colors, and slogans.

For the UM Lampung tertiary institution, it already has a slogan that is "entrepreneur campus", the campus is an entrepreneur". Researchers see that to carry out this slogan, UM Lampung is trying optimally through MoUs with several companies and other parties, besides that UM Lampung also has a Career Development and Service Center, so that students can consult and learn and get training to be ready for entrepreneurship as well as Join a company/institution/agency.

Related to the slogan of UM Lampung "entrepreneur campus", the campus of entrepreneurs", researchers see a business opportunity that can be formed and implemented by UM Lampung. The potential of human resources is owned by UM Lampung, the market potential is also large, it's just a matter of how UM Lampung can implement it. This will be one of the promotions, publications and one of the proofs of the UM Lampung slogan "entrepreneur campus", the campus of entrepreneurs" will be one of the elements to improve the positive image of society and can

have an impact on increasing the number of UM Lampung students.

The business opportunity that can be formed and implemented by UM Lampung is by forming an Event Organizer (EO). UM Lampung has a lot of potential human resources who can join the event organizer.

For the potential or targets of UM Lampung's EO, the extended family of Muhammadiyah members, UM Lampung

itself, and the community. EO can be one of the answers from "entrepreneur campus, campus of entrepreneurs".

Furthermore, to get a positive image, there must be stages in image formation, this is in accordance with what was conveyed by S eftiani (2017) that the stages of forming a corporate image can be described in the following flow diagram :

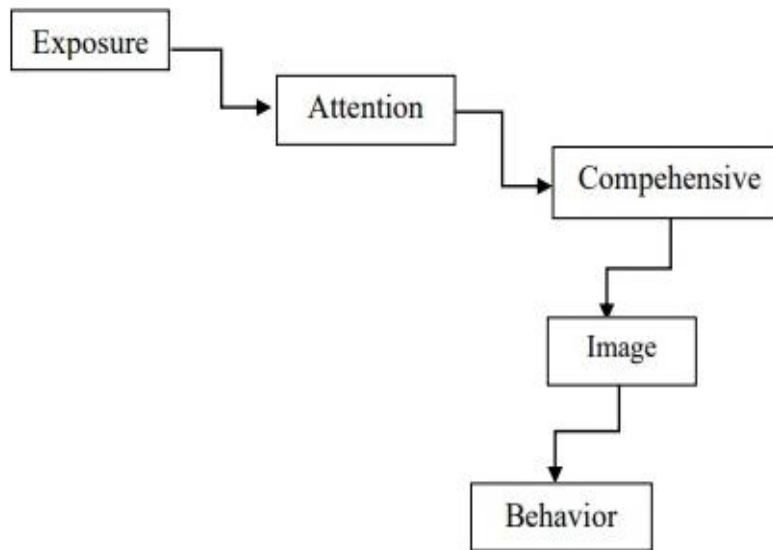


Figure 1. the Stages of Forming a Corporate Image

The explanation of the flow of the stages of forming a corporate image is as follows: The object knows (sees or hears) the efforts made by the company in forming the corporate image. Paying attention to the company's efforts, after an effort to pay attention to the object tries to understand everything that exists in the company's efforts, the formation of a corporate image on the object, the corporate image that is formed will determine the behavior of the target object.

Furthermore, strategies that can be carried out to shape the company's image include the following: Shaping the perception of the target segment. The image to be formed must reflect the true identity of the company nothing more and nothing less, maintaining

perceptions, efforts to maintain image by maintaining the implementation of advertising programs and Public Relations in accordance with the company's plan. Changing the perception of unfavorable market segments. Companies that are professionally managed will strive to change the perception of unfavorable target segments by improving themselves from within.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Conclusion

From the results of this study it is known that 1) The existence of public relations is needed by every tertiary institution, therefore public relations must be

able to play a role in helping universities carry out a work program, including promoting UM Lampung; 2) Public relations is very important, it is the spearhead for tertiary institutions, therefore in the activity of publishing a news or public relations information for UM Lampung one must be careful and thorough not to make mistakes that can negatively affect the image of the tertiary institution; and 3) The role of UM Lampung's public relations has not been carried out optimally, public relations in the implementation of its activities does not have a work program, both short term and long term so that the implementation of public relations activities is still incidental.

4.2. Suggestion

Some suggestions regarding the role of Public Relations (PR) of Muhammadiyah University of Lampung in improving a positive image are

- 1) **Development of Quality Content.** PR can create informative, relevant and high-quality content regarding the achievements, activities and positive initiatives of the university. These can be articles, videos, infographics and more. The content can be shared through the university website, social media and other communication channels to attract the attention of the audience and provide good information.
- 2) **Strong Media Relations:** Building good relations with local, regional and national media is very important. PR can work closely with journalists and media editors to ensure that the information provided is accurate and positive. Through news, coverage and interviews, the positive image of the university can be strengthened.
- 3) **Community Engagement:** PR can organize activities that involve the surrounding community, such as seminars, workshops or social activities. This will demonstrate the university's involvement in advancing society and provide opportunities for faculty, students and staff to interact with the community in a positive way.
- 4) **Alumni Success Stories:** Putting forward the success stories of alumni who have achieved achievements in various fields can be an effective way to improve the university's image. These inspirational stories can be promoted through a variety of channels, including social media and university websites.
- 5) **Transparency and Responsiveness:** PR must remain transparent in dealing with challenges or issues that may arise. Respond quickly and honestly to questions and concerns, while highlighting the university's efforts to address the issue.
- 6) **Social and Environmental Campaigns:** Taking an active role in social campaigns and environmental issues can give a positive picture of a university that cares about global issues. This can also attract the interest of prospective students who have an interest in social and environmental issues.
- 7) **Collaboration with Industry:** PR can work on collaboration with related companies or industries to develop joint education and research programs. This will enhance the university's image as an institution that is closely connected with the industrial world and has relevance in the real world.
- 8) **Academic and Research Achievements:** Prioritizing academic achievements and research conducted by faculty and students can help improve the university's image. PR can arrange seminars, conferences or scientific exhibitions to show the

university's contribution to the development of science.

- 9) Relations with Internal Stakeholders: Apart from focusing on the external public, relations with students, lecturers, staff and alumni are also important. Making sure they feel valued and involved in university life can help build a positive image.
- 10) Awards and Recognition: Feel free to promote awards, recognition and rankings received by the university. This will provide legitimacy and increase positive perceptions of university quality.

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