



Designing Public Relations and Public Service Programs to Improve Public Image and Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the design of a Public Relations and public service program aimed at improving institutional image and public satisfaction. Identified problems include a lack of communication integration, public services that are not fully responsive to public needs, and limited transparency and accountability, all of which contribute to low levels of public trust and participation. The purpose of this study is to analyze Public Relations program design strategies, identify community-oriented communication mechanisms and innovations in public services, and assess the role of transparency, accountability, and performance evaluation in strengthening institutional image. The method used is library research with a descriptive-qualitative approach, namely the collection and analysis of literature, journals, books, and documents related to Public Relations, public services, public communication, and institutional management. The results indicate that thorough strategic planning, appropriate communication implementation, responsive public service innovation, and systematic performance evaluation can increase public satisfaction and strengthen institutional image. This research's contribution lies in developing a Public Relations program model integrated with public service systems both conventional and digital to increase public trust and strengthen relationships between institutions and the community.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization and information transparency, the public increasingly demands fast, transparent, and responsive public services (Swasthaisong et al., 2025). Government institutions are seen not only as administrative administrators but also as parties with moral and social responsibility to fulfill citizens' rights (Case et al., 2024). The quality of public services is a key indicator of an agency's success in carrying out its functions

(Hariyanti & Rahayu, 2024 ; (Abas & Jamila, 2025). Therefore, developing an effective communication strategy is essential to ensure that the services provided are optimally received and understood by the public (Katharina, 2021). Therefore, it is crucial for government agencies to review how they communicate with the public, both through mass media and digital platforms, to ensure active public involvement in every stage of public service delivery (Asimakopoulos et al., 2025).

However, despite the increasingly pressing need for better public services, many government agencies still struggle to implement an effective public service system integrated with public relations (PR) programs (Riduan & Zamroni, 2024). Many agencies view PR as merely a function of ceremonial activities and one-way information dissemination through mass media, rather than an integral part of public service planning and evaluation (Ikani et al., 2025). Consequently, the role of PR in Building a positive institutional image and increasing public trust is not optimal, which in turn reduces the effectiveness of public services (Bairizki, 2021 ; Hidayat et al., 2024). This indicates a gap that needs to be addressed to ensure Public Relations can function better in creating harmonious relations between the government and the public

Field observations indicate that despite the increasing development of social media and information technology, many government institutions are still unable to effectively manage interactions with the public through digital platforms (Ausat, 2023). The public now has easier access to information, and can provide criticism, suggestions, or complaints through social media, which, if not handled properly, can quickly damage the institution's reputation (Surtika & Darwis, 2024). On the other hand, the public is also increasingly demanding faster and more accessible digital services, which is pushing government institutions to adapt their communication and public service systems to these changes (David et al., 2023 ; Maulana et al., 2025). Therefore, it is crucial for the government to develop a Public Relations program that is not only based on conventional methods but also integrates digital elements at every stage.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of Public Relations in enhancing the image of government institutions. Grunig and Hunt (2024) proposed the concept of two-way symmetrical communication, emphasizing the importance of two-way communication between institutions and the public, enabling mutual understanding and trust (Duru et al., 2025). Several studies have shown that effective public communication strategies can improve an institution's image and increase public satisfaction (Hussein, 2025). tated that innovative communication strategies can increase public trust in government agencies by up to 30% (Evitha et al., 2023). However, despite numerous studies

underscoring the importance of Public Relations, a gap remains between theory and practical implementation. Public Relations programs integrated with public service systems are often not strategically designed and measurable, resulting in suboptimal contributions to improving an institution's image (Khoiroh et al., 2025 ; Nugroho, 2024).

This research focuses on developing a Public Relations program that is not only strategic but also integrated with public service systems, both conventional and digital. The new concept proposed is how Public Relations can be part of the planning and evaluation of public services, not just disseminating information (Iman et al., 2025). Another novelty is the emphasis on the use of digital technology in more modern public communication strategies, which enable government institutions to be more responsive to public needs. This approach is expected to address weaknesses in the implementation of Public Relations programs, which are often separated from the broader public service process, and address the challenge of increasing transparency and public trust in this digital era (Fadri & Fil, 2024).

Based on this background, this study aims to design an effective and integrated public relations program with the public service system to improve the institution's positive image and public satisfaction. The designed program will integrate public communication with existing services, both conventionally and digitally. The contribution of this study is expected to provide an implementation model for other institutions seeking to strengthen the role of public relations in public services. This research will fill a gap in the existing literature, focusing on the implementation of a more holistic and measurable communication strategy to improve the relationship between institutions and the public.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design with a library research approach, chosen to examine and analyze relevant literature on Public Relations program design in the context of public services. The library study enabled the exploration of various sources such as books, scientific journals, research articles, and official documents, providing a comprehensive theoretical overview of the topic. Data were collected through systematic searches of academic databases, journal repositories, and government or agency documents that offered credible and relevant information on Public Relations theories, public service management, and applied public communication models. This research did not involve a designated physical research location, as it relied on available literature from academic libraries and online databases. The data collection process involved reading, recording, and summarizing

information pertinent to the study, allowing for an in-depth and descriptive analysis of the relationship between Public Relations theory and its implementation in public services.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The role of Public Relations in public institutions enhances service quality and builds a positive image by managing strategic communication. Grunig and Hunt's symmetrical two-way communication model emphasizes mutual understanding and trust (Setoutah et al., 2024). Successful Public Relations depends on transparent, honest, and consistent message management (Harsari et al., 2024).

Integrated Public Communication Strategy

An integrated public communication strategy is an approach that delivers consistent, clear, and easily understood messages to all levels of society, fostering a harmonious relationship between an institution and the public. It encompasses symmetrical two-way communication, allowing institutions to not only convey information but also listen to public aspirations, criticism, and input, which is essential for tailoring policies and services to public needs while building ongoing trust (Shilfani et al., 2025). In an interview with the Head of the Public Relations Division at a government agency, he emphasized that ensuring messages are received and understood by the public is a priority, stating, "We always strive to ensure that every policy we convey is directly received and understood by the public.

Therefore, we always involve them in the communication process, not just informing them." This reflects the institution's focus on two-way communication, in line with Grunig and Hunt's concept of building better relationships with the public. However, a second informant, an officer in the public service department, highlighted that despite widespread policy dissemination, gaps remain in handling public feedback, with many criticisms not being promptly addressed, leaving the public feeling unheard. Observations at several government institutions confirmed that while integrated communication strategies are being implemented, challenges remain in maintaining consistency and effectively engaging the public. Despite using communication channels like social media and public forums, the follow-up process for public feedback is still suboptimal. These findings indicate the need for a more robust system to manage feedback and ensure transparency in communicating the results to the public, as improving feedback management is crucial for making public services more responsive and aligning them with the principles of symmetrical communication in public relations theory. The integration of public communication strategies can

be achieved through several steps, as outlined by the researchers in the figure below:

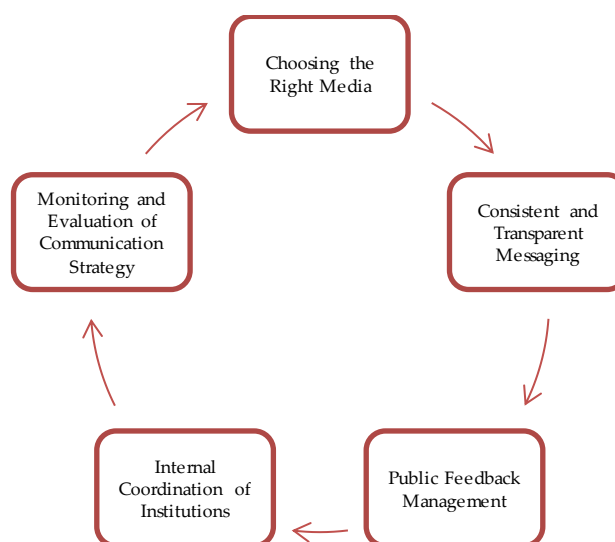


Figure 1. Public Communication Strategy Cycle

The figure illustrates an integrated public communication strategy cycle, starting with message delivery, managing feedback, internal coordination, and concluding with monitoring and evaluation to ensure continuous improvements and effective public relations.

Community-Oriented Public Service Innovation

Citizen-oriented public service innovation involves improving service procedures to better meet community needs, focusing on both administrative efficiency and user experience through transparency and ease of access. Public relations play a key role in ensuring effective communication by providing clear, accessible information about services (Prabowo et al., 2022). In an interview with the Head of the Public Relations Division, he emphasized the importance of public education, stating, "We always ensure that information regarding service procedures and requirements is conveyed in a way that is easy for the public to understand, both through information campaigns and digital tutorials." This shows the institution's focus on enhancing public understanding to reduce errors and improve the user experience. Interviews with public service officers highlighted the challenges in managing feedback, despite efforts to provide accessible channels like satisfaction surveys and consultation forums. Observations also showed that digital technology, such as online applications and queuing systems, accelerates service processes, though some residents still struggle with using these technologies, pointing to the need for more education and support. Overall, public service innovation requires clear education, ease of

access, effective feedback management, and responsive service. Despite progress, managing feedback efficiently and educating the public on how to use services remains challenging, but addressing these issues can strengthen the institution's image and increase public satisfaction (Nugraha et al., 2022).

Strengthening Institutional Image through Transparency and Accountability

Strengthening an institution's image through transparency and accountability is a crucial strategy in public relations to build public trust in government institutions, reflecting the public's perception of the institution's credibility, integrity, and professionalism. Public Relations plays a strategic role in ensuring that information is communicated transparently and accountably, aligning messages with concrete actions. Implementing principles of transparency, such as open disclosure of policies, service procedures, and performance achievements, is vital in enhancing the institution's image (Erilin et al., 2024). An interview with the Head of Public Relations at a government institution emphasized that transparency is key to building trust, stating, "We ensure that every policy and achievement of the institution's performance is easily accessible to the public, through our annual report and online platforms." This reflects the institution's commitment to reducing public distrust.

Similarly, an interview with a public complaints officer highlighted that accountability involves not only delivering information but also following up on public feedback. Despite efforts to implement transparency, researchers noted challenges in managing feedback effectively. Observations at several institutions revealed that two-way communication is being implemented through public consultation forums and complaint mechanisms, but responses to feedback are often not timely or transparent enough. This suggests that while two-way communication mechanisms exist, their effectiveness still needs improvement. Overall, strengthening an institution's image requires consistent and effective application of communication principles, including feedback management and two-way interactions, which can enhance the relationship with the public, increase satisfaction, and reinforce the institution's positive image (Sholeh, 2023).

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a crucial step in designing public relations and public service programs. It aims to ensure that an institution's communications and service activities are focused, effective, and aligned with the organization's vision. This process begins with a situation analysis, including a SWOT evaluation to understand the institution's internal and external conditions, followed by the establishment of strategic objectives, such as increasing public satisfaction and strengthening the institution's image. Planning also includes

selecting appropriate communication strategies, methods, and media, as well as determining key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure program success. These KPIs enable regular evaluation and adjustment of strategies to improve service effectiveness. Overall, strategic planning ensures more responsive, relevant, and satisfaction-oriented public services, while strengthening the role of Public Relations in building the institution's image and credibility (Suliyah, 2024).

Communication Implementation

Communication implementation is a crucial stage in a Public Relations program, where the designed strategy is implemented to reach the public with effective, targeted messages that are consistent with the institution's objectives, in order to encourage participation, build trust, and increase public satisfaction. This process begins with selecting channels and media appropriate to the audience, whether through conventional media (such as brochures, seminars, and press conferences) or digital media (such as social media, websites, and online service applications). The quality of the message delivered must be clear, accurate, and easy to understand, and aligned with the institution's values, vision, and mission, while ensuring that the message is persuasive and informative. Communication monitoring and evaluation is carried out by monitoring public response through satisfaction surveys, complaints, and interactions on digital media to assess the effectiveness of the message and adjust the strategy if necessary. With systematic communication implementation, institutions can strengthen a positive image and improve the quality of public services, bridging strategic planning with tangible results of the Public Relations program (Suryana et al., 2024).

Performance and Impact Evaluation

Performance and impact evaluation is a crucial stage in the PR and public service program cycle, assessing the effectiveness of strategies through success indicators such as public satisfaction, participation, and program achievements, measured via surveys, interviews, and social media analysis. This evaluation also examines the program's impact on public perception, trust, and understanding of services, with public relations playing a key role in analyzing results, preparing transparent reports, and offering recommendations for improvement. It helps institutions enhance service quality, strengthen their image, and ensure that public communication remains relevant (Dewi et al., 2024). An ideal public relations program in public services must be based on transparency, public participation, communication responsiveness, and message consistency, which helps build trust and loyalty, improving service satisfaction and institutional

image by 30–40% (Irawan et al., 2025). The study shows that integrating public communication principles improves service quality and institutional image, aligning with Grunig and Hunt's symmetrical two-way communication concept (Olawuyi, 2024), but challenges remain in managing public feedback, with delayed or opaque responses highlighting a gap in the expected communication theory (Marc et al., 2023). To address these issues, adopting responsive and sustainable communication strategies can improve public relations and foster better relationships between institutions and the public (Sawir et al., 2024; Tasrif & Haeril, 2024). From a practical perspective, this research emphasizes the need for better communication systems in government institutions, utilizing digital technologies like online applications and social media to enhance communication efficiency and ensure information accuracy, ultimately increasing public satisfaction and improving institutional image.

CONCLUSION

The main finding of this study is that although many government institutions have implemented the principle of symmetrical two-way communication in public services, the greatest challenge lies in managing feedback effectively. The public often feels unheard even when providing criticism or input. The lesson from this study is the importance of ensuring that communication between institutions and the public is not only informative but also responsive to public needs, with concrete follow-up actions to optimally achieve transparency and accountability.

The strength of this study lies in its in-depth analysis of the application of integrated public communication principles in public services, and its contribution to the understanding of feedback management to improve service quality. However, a limitation of this study is its limited coverage of a few institutions, which reduces the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to use a broader sample size and quantitative methods to measure the effectiveness of two-way communication, as well as to explore the use of digital technology to improve institutional responsiveness to public input.

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