

# Implementation of Public Relations at Indonesian Railway Company in Jember

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to describe the implementation of public relations at Limited Indonesian Railway Company in Jember in a two-way of communicating between the company and its public and publicity policies and corporate activities to provide social effects in the community. This research uses qualitative paradigm. Data collection through interviews, passive observation, some news options in the mass media and documentation. Data validity uses source triangulation, consistency, expansion of participation and examination by peers. Data were analyzed by domain and taxonomic analysis. The findings show that Limited Indonesian Railway Company in Jember communicated the company with its historical audience and coincided with certain moments with public relations: press release, press call, and press interview techniques. Public communications in the form of novel and product clarification with press release and press call/interview techniques to media workers, meanwhile, persuasive communication is done for the dissemination of promo provided by the company with press release technique to media workers. Activities presented to impact social change, attitude change, opinion change, and behavioral changes to the general public as well as train customers.*

**Keywords:** Public Relations, Media Relations

## 1. Introductions

Media is an integral part of mass communication. In essence, the media of the extension of the human tongue is very meritorious in improving the development of its social structure. The globalization of communication and information from the media gives birth to a social effect that is subject to changes in social and cultural values of society. Current media growth rate technology. With technological sophistication from the top borders to the wider world now feels as a small, interconnected village.

Communities from various countries can interconnect directly, mass, even instantly. Society as a consumer of information to create social knowledge and social understanding that happened in society in general. Need to be monitored, the community must be observant and sorting in choosing the media for information needs in his life. Media as a change agent plays an important role in any publication of messages or information published or broadcast.

The development of this media makes a public relations media as one of the important audience in providing positive information in affecting behavior someone to products of this company and make people interested to use products from the company. The importance of this media encourages organizations to conduct special activities to establish good relations with media called Media Relations. Media Relations is used to achieve publication or broadcasting maximally over a message or information from resource persons from a social phenomenon to create knowledge and understanding as well as changes in attitude for audiences readers or media listeners. Media becomes one of the places to show attitude and reaction made by organization/company. The goal is to equate the perception of what the company actually does and readers can understand the situation in the organization or company.

It is important for Public Relations officers to engage in Media Relations activities because the emergence of new transportation ie airplanes, travel agents, and long-distance freight indirectly make competition in the media more stringent to attract prospective passengers. This is evident through the data of the number of passengers each year in the Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember which has ups and downs.

Some types of transportation are competing to bring up the image of safety, comfort, and timeliness of arrival and departure in the eyes of the public through the news in the media both self-managed media (social media) and through the mass media. Meanwhile, the media in the area of operation Jember only a few media that preach positive activities of the company there are also some media that only take events or negative information on the company. Not to mention there is much information that is not heard or read by the public related publications public relations area Jember operations. When this medium is maximized properly and correctly it is not impossible to provide social effects to the public and can attract more passengers to use the rail services.

Through this activity, it is expected to create the closeness and confidence of the external public to the company. That way it will create a harmonious relationship between the organization / company with the external public, so it can cause a good impression of the company in the eyes of the public. Building relationships with print, electronic, and internet media required a harmonious relationship and depth of information owned by public relations officers. Communicating through activities conducted by public relations officers through Media Relations can facilitate the work of public relations officers and the media itself and the proximity of public relations officers with media workers more familiar.

## 2. Research Problems

The formulation of this research problem is "How the implementation of public relations at Limited Indonesian Railway Company in Jember?"

## 3. Structure

### a) Public Relations

Baskin, Aronoff & Lattimore defines Public Relations as a management function that helps organizations to achieve goals, define philosophy, and facilitate organizations to change. According to Cutlip, Center & Broom (in Sulistyaningtyas, 2007: 6), Public Relations is a management function that builds and maintains good and useful relationships between organizations and the public that affect the success or failure of the organization.

The task or activity of Public Relations is to conduct mutual communication between the institution and the public which aims to create mutual understanding and support for the achievement of a certain goal, policy, production activity, for the progress of the institution or positive image of the institution concerned. PR activities are closely related to the formation of public opinion and change of attitude from the community (Nova, 2009: 38).

According Effendy (2009: 8) in the book Dimensions - Dimensions of Communication, communication purposes are as follows: a. to change the society ; b. to change the attitude ; c. to change the opinion ; d. to change behavior. Messages conveyed by the communicator to the communicant different forms. Message forms can be clarified according to their nature. The forms of messages according to Widjaja (1997: 14) are: (i)informative; Giving information and then able to draw its own conclusions, in certain situations informative messages are more successful than persuasive, (ii) *Persuasive*; that is to arouse the understanding and consciousness of a person that what we convey will give the opinion or attitude so that there is a change, but the changes that occur is on the will alone, (iii) *Coercive*; Forcing by using sanctions. The well-known form of delivery in this way is agitation with emphasis that creates inner stress and fear among peers among the public.

This is in line with the role of Public Relations by Pudjiastuti (2010: 31) is one of the main role of public relations is a communicator company, institution, or individual to convey information about the company, institution, or individual who represented to the public, both internal and external.

### b) Marketing Public Relations

Kotler who first brought up the concept of Marketing Public Relations (MPR), as the development of the next stage of the previous concept (mega marketing) popularized by Thomas L.H. (in Ruslan, 2008: 245), through his book *The Marketer's Guide to Public Relations*. The concept is as follows: "*Marketing Public Relations is a process of planning and evaluating programs that stimulate sales and customers. This is done through the communication of credible information and the impression*

*that can connect the company, the product with the needs and attention of the customer*".

In the development of this last activity, Marketing Public Relations is quite effective and efficient in the dissemination of messages or information. In addition, Marketing Public Relations contains the power of persuasive (persuasive approach) and educate (educated) the public or public plus the sophistication of electronic media also provides various benefits for marketing relations. Pull strategy, followed by subsequent tactics, push strategy with efforts to push for the expansion of influence (improvement) and the field of marketing (product marketing oriented) and the last pass strategy (strategy to persuade) to support (back up ) to achieve the goal of Marketing Public Relations (MPR).

### c) Media Relations

According Darmastuti (2012: 42), Media Relations is an activity related to communication media to do publicity or respond to the interests of the media against the organization. Meanwhile Iriantara (2005, p.29-30) defines media relations as part of the external PR that fosters and develops good relations with the mass media as a means of communication between the organization and its public to achieve organizational goals. Simply put, when described the flow of communication in media relations practice it will appear as shown in Figure 1 the flow of communication media relations below:

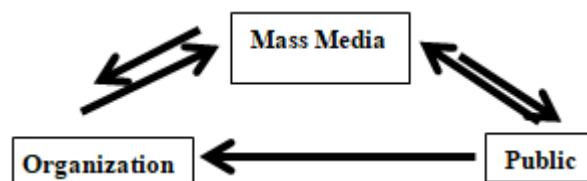


Figure 1: Media Relations communication flow

(Source: Iriantara, 2005: 54)

The communication model proposed by Darmastuti is Harmonious Mutualism Relationship Model. The Harmonious Mutualism Relationship Model is a model of friendly relations in the context of symbolic mutualism in which mutual trust and mutual help ensues. This relationship is an informal and friendship relationship, it can even be called a friendly relationship of friendship and no distance between media workers, including journalists with Public Relations officials. media relations is a form of strategy by public relations officers to the media through various activities. The goal of this strategy is to build and improve good and continuous relationships with the media.

According to Sarah Silver (Darmastuti, 2012: 180-185) media relations activities are divided into two parts: events and writing. Some media relations activities in the form of media relations events (events) are as follows: (a) Press Conference, (b) Press Calls, (c) Media Briefing, (d) Radio, Television, Newspaper, and Magazine Interviews, ( e) Meeting with Editors. While media relations activities in the form of writing are as follows: (a) Press release, (b) Electronics Communication

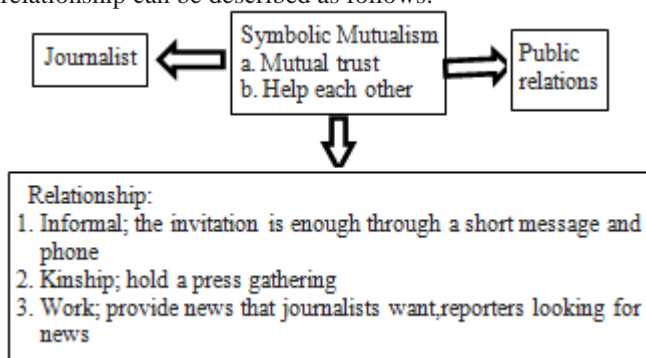
#### 4. Research Methods

This research uses descriptive research type with qualitative approach. Descriptive method according Sugiyono (2008: 26) is a method used to describe and analyze a research results but not used to make wider conclusions. Data collection uses semi-structured and free interview guidelines but all are profound. Interviews with guidelines so that the discussion that will be analyzed by the researcher does not go beyond the research topic and make it easier for researchers to sort the required information. The informant was chosen based on snowball technique with key informant of public relations officer of limited company of railway indonesia area of operation of Jember and his assistant. This study also uses passive observation so that researchers do not participate directly in the involvement of activities undertaken and Media Relations techniques that run appropriate public relations tasks.

The validity of the data uses source triangulation, sharpness, extension of research, and peer examination. According to Patton in Moleong (2010: 330) source triangulation is comparing and checking the reliability of information that has been obtained through different tools and time. Data analysis using domains, and taxonomy. The domain analysis is a general description of the object and the research topic. Taxonomy analysis focuses on public relations activities and Media Relations conducted by the company.

#### 5. Results and Discussion

The presence of trains in Indonesia is marked by the first embarkation of railroad construction in Kemijen village on Friday, June 17, 1864 by the Governor General of the Dutch East Indies. L.A.J Baron Sloet van den Beele. Train Company Limited Indonesia is a company engaged in mass transportation services that play a role in the development and growth of the Indonesian economy. Public Relations activities conducted in Limited Indonesia Railway Company in Jember using Harmonious Mutualism Relationship Model proposed by Darmastuti (2012; 166). The model is a friendly relationship in the context of symbolic mutualism where there is a process of mutual trust and mutual help. This relationship is an informal and friendship relationship, it can even be called a mutually beneficial relationship of friendship and there is no distance between media workers, including journalists with public relations officers. This relationship can be described as follows:



**Figure 2:** Flow Model Public Relations: Model Harmonious Mutualisme Relationship  
 (Source: Darmastuti, 2012)

The activity aims to provide information and knowledge needs for the audience so that they know and understand what is being done by the company. The following activity activities emphasize external audiences because those who assess and use the company's products can interact with each other between the company and the public whether the activities undertaken by public relations have benefits and effects or not to external audiences.

The following activities of public relations of the Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember related to Harmonious Mutualism Relationship model, which includes:

- a) Informal; the public relations officer has a different style of communication with the public relations officer before, the flexible style, where the public relations officers are the media workers. The public relations officer realizes that the style of the worker is not gap between the public relations officer and the media worker. The results are displayed by the government of Jember. The "Journalist-KAI Jember" was formed since the new Public Relations officer of office in January 2016. In inviting meeting with reporters using WhatsApps message and phone.
- b) Kinship; Limited Indonesian Railway Company in Jember hold events or communication activities that are informative. The event was held on October 31 to November 7, 2015 in the town square of Jember. Participation in such activities is establishing kinship ties with media workers and the community. Its activities include promoting various services, marketing asset products that can be rented by the public, a photo gallery of trains and handing out souvenirs and souvenirs to visitors. In addition there is also a screening of the transformation of Indonesia Railway Limited Company that makes visitors amazed and more curious with the various innovations that have been done.
- c) Work; Indonesia Railway Limited Company in Jember provide ticket promo price offered in February to welcome the Lunar New Year in 2016. The process of public relations is to send a press release that persuasive message a week before the opening of the purchase of promo tickets to the media workers who are in the environment through emails of media workers who are in the list of law offices and public relations officers in Jember.

The Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember uses top-line media to reach a relatively large audience and is not limited to operating areas. The use of top-line media that is by sharing press release to the mass media contacts in Public Relations Railway Limited Company Indonesia in Jember via email. Where public relations send press release as a routine activity of the company to the media workers in the environment to achieve maximum publicity to the target audience.

The public relations activities of the Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember use top-line media to reach a relatively large audience and unlimited areas of operation. The use of top-line media is by sharing press releases to mass media contacts that exist in Public Relations Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember via email. Where public relations officers send press releases as a

routine corporate activity to media workers in the environment to achieve maximum publicity to the target audience.

While lower line media is used to reach a relatively smaller audience and with a fairly expensive cost. Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember uses lower line media in several ways, one of them utilizing Car Free Day as a venue for socialization and distribution of prizes in the form of vouchers that can be replaced with tickets of East Pearl Train to people who enjoy Car Free Day. The medium used in the activity is a LOKO clown that resembles a railroad locomotive to attract the public to come and see what is being done by employees of the Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember.

Documentation and clipping as a benchmark related to the extent to which the success of public relations in achieving achievements and reputation achieved, about perception, complaints, to the acquisition of images in the eyes of the public. Documentation is stored in soft file and uploaded to Management Information Center of Indonesian Railway Limited Company to be known by all managers and employees of Operation Area in Indonesia. Documentation from the mass media includes news published in the mass media also made into a clipping sent to the center once every 6 months. While clipping is done if there is documentation done, this is done coherently from the date and hours of the activity took place.

Evaluation conducted by the company Limited Railway Company Indonesia in Jember is an activity undertaken by the company in the activities of Media Relations is the validation of data and facts that occur in the field. Evaluation of its activities Public relations to external audiences can check how small the customer complaints and number of subscriber increases in the Information Management System as well as reports from related units about the community or passenger response related to the activities they have done.

The Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember also conducted a public opinion survey through its website to find out public opinion about the Indonesian Railway Company in Jember regarding the company's performance so far that it can find a subject or an input for the company's next business process. Public relations is in charge of collecting criticism and suggestions and will convey to the leadership when the formulation of company policy when meeting with all managers and members in Jember for suggestions and criticisms can be a consideration for the company in planning and implementing new policies made by the limited liability company rail Indonesia in Jember. Evaluation conducted regarding opinion through the website of limited Indonesian railway company in Jember conducted every 3 months based on the data entered in the website.

## 6. Conclusion

The conclusion of the discussion of the implementation of Media Relations Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember, as follows:

- a) Communication model by public relations officer with mass media is Harmonious Mutualism Relationship

Model that is to build mutual trust by using social media (WhatsApps) as informal relationship between public relation officer and media worker.

- b) Implementation of Public Relations such as by doing press release, press call, press interview. Meanwhile, non-formal activities are in the form of personal relationship, servicing media, electronic communication (email) which includes giving data requested by media workers as well as routine public relations activities.

## 7. Suggestion

As a policy information funnel that comes from internal Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember, public relations need to pay attention to several main points to support success in Media Relations activities, namely:

- a) Create a special website or multiple accounts on social media (facebook, instagram, or twitter) Indonesian Railway Limited Company in Jember to make it easier for media workers to quote as news material and as a spread of new company policies to be accessible by the general public to attract sympathy and interest they.
- b) The close relationship between public relations officers and Journalists needs to be improved and public relations officers compose a message where the value of news at the beginning of the sentence so that the contents of the message can be loaded intact by the media and the media needs to provide a complete news without changing the editorial politics of the media concerned.

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