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### Do the Different Terms Affect the Roles? A Measurement of Excellent and Managerial Role of Business and Government Public Relations Practices in Indonesia

Rachmat Kriyantono<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Senior Lecturer in Public Relations, School of Communication, Branijaya University, Malang, Indonesia, E-mail: [rachmat\\_kr@ub.ac.id](mailto:rachmat_kr@ub.ac.id)

#### **Abstract:**

There are two terms that refer to the similar activities in Indonesia: Public relations (PR) and society relations (*Humas*). Based on the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Theory, it is assumed that the term that is inherent in a person can influence the behavior of a person who bears that term. However, it is interesting assessing whether differences in these terms affected the role played by practitioners in the different context of organizations: business and government. The ten principles of Excellence Theory are applied in this research to evaluate the practitioners' activities. Through online surveys, the author reveals several propositions about the practice of public relations and *Humas* in Indonesia, among others, public relations practitioners tend to have a balance of public priority objectives, internal and external, rather than *Humas* practitioners; public relations practitioners tend to perform a managerial role than the *Humas* practitioners; and public relations practitioners tend to be more excellent than the *Humas* practitioners. This study also confirms that it would be possible that the Excellence Theory is still partially adopted, not its whole principles.

**Subjects:** Business and Organizational Management, Communication, Public Relations, Organizational Management, Social Sciences.

**Keywords:** Business and Government Public Relations, Excellence Theory, *Humas*, Indonesia, Self-Fulfilling Prophecy.

#### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, there are two main citations for practitioners: 'public relations' and '*Humas*'. Public relations as a term is widely used by business organizations. Meanwhile, government agencies such as state ministries, provincials/districts and cities, state universities, and state-owned enterprises use the term '*Humas*' or '*Hubungan Masyarakat*' (Society Relations) as Indonesian language translation to 'public relations'. The term of '*Humas*' for government agencies has been set up in several regulations, such as The Ministry of State Apparatus Regulations No. 6/2014 and No. 30/2011.

Actually, the literal meaning of 'public relations' term is not the same as '*Humas*' (society relations). The meaning of the word '*hubungan*' is equal to 'relations' but '*masyarakat*' (society) is different from 'public'. The term 'society' is too broad while the 'public' is only a part of the broader society. Public is only a group of people or groups in the society. The public does not have to be in a certain geographical area, does not have to know each other, and does not need to be bound by the same social norms, but, it is bound by common interests towards an issue and therefore the membership is temporary (Cutlip, Center, and Broom, 2011; Kriyantono, 2016a; Lattimore, Baskin, Heiman, and Toth, 2010; Seitel, 2001).

Although they have different terms, the practitioners should be able to perform their role as managers with good communication. The theory that is widely used to measure the normative standard of good public relations practice is the Excellence Theory (Bowen, Rawlins, and Martin, 2010; Cameron, Cropp, and Reber, 2001; Fawkes, 2004; Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier, 2002; Harrison, 2008; Kent and Taylor, 2007). This theory dominates studies and research in public relations (Gower, 2006; Pasadeos, Berger, and Renfro, 2010; Sallot, Lyon, Acosta-Alzura, and Jones, 2003; Skerlep, 2001), which has ten excellence standards principles of public relations activities: Public relations is involved in the strategic function of management (involvement); Public relations is a part of the dominant coalition and can directly communicate with top management (Empowerment); Public Relations function is integrated into one department alone (Integration); Management function that is separated from the other management functions (Independence); Public relations shall exercise the functions of communications manager not only as communications technician (managerial); Adopting a two-way symmetric model as the main base to establish a public relations (Symmetrical model); Internal communication system is symmetrical two-way directional (Symmetrical internal communication); Public relations function is implemented on the basis of adequate knowledge (Knowledge); diversity of role in carrying out the functions (Role diversity); and Public relations should give priority to the code of conduct and integrity of the profession (Ethical Public Relations) (Bowen and Rawlins, 2010; Bivins, 2008; Grunig, 2008; Grunig *et. al.*, 2002).

It can be said that the ten standards of the Excellence Theory puts two proportionally roles of public relations, namely the managerial role and communications technician. It is linked to Dozier's original concepts of managerial role, which is related to activities that assist management in identifying and solving problems, a mediator and facilitator who provides a two-way communication channel between an organization and its publics, and as a partner or friend for senior management to address the various problems affecting the organization (Dozier, 1984). Technical role is more related to technical works, namely making brochures, magazines, calendars, or press-release (Kriyantono, 2016b; Lattimore *et. al.*, 2010).

In sum, the author assumes that the use of the term of "Public Relations" and "*Humas*" does not matter. More important, no matter which term is applied, the public relations managers should perform their activities based on the excellence standards in public relations: put managerial role above technical roles. To verify the assumption, the research aims to reveal whether the different terms determine the excellence level of practitioners in order to map the current public relations practices in Indonesia in term of the use of various terms.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

This study seems to be urgent when the Excellence Theory is connected to the self-prophecy theory which states that self-concept will be formed depending on how the person sees himself and labeling given by others against him.

“The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the original false conception come true”(Merton, 1948, p. 195).

This theory is related to the fundamental theorem of social sciences:

“If men defines situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” (Merton, 1948, p. 193).

Hence, the author assumes that a name/term/label that is inherent in a person can influence the behavior of a person who bears that name/term. If a practitioner called himself “*Humas*” then, according to Merton’s theory, there is potential he will establish relationships only to “society”, *i.e.* external parties (because *Humas* means society relations). Someone is likely to assume his job is just taking care of “society”, *i.e.* people outside the organization, while the people within the organization itself is considered “not public” but “own family” so it does not become part of the work of *Humas*. This was confirmed by several definitions that consider the “society” as a common community of organizations, either directly or indirectly associated with the activities of the organization (Soekanto, 2009). Research conducted by Arthatianda (2015) found that some practitioners who call themselves *Humas* were focused on the mass media and the community as main target of their activities.

If it is associated with the excellence standard of public relations activities, based on the description above, the author formulate research hypotheses as follows:

**H1:** The public relations practitioners tend to have a higher level of excellence than *Humas* practitioners.

**H2:** The public relations practitioners tend to perform a managerial role than the *Humas* practitioners

**H3:** The public relations practitioners tend to define symmetric communication for internal and external public, while the *Humas* practitioners do it only for external public.

### Various Terms in Business and Government Public Relations Fields

Understanding the meaning of public relations is important. As Hagley (1999, p. 34), after a 30 years career as a public relations practitioner, said:

If you can’t define what you do, you can’t measure what you do. And if you can’t measure what you do, you can’t evaluate what you do. And if you can’t evaluate what you do, no one will pay, or pay much, for what you do. ...yes, most people in public relations cannot define what they do.

From reviewing literature, the author has found that the term public relations has not been the only term used in the practice of public relations. Some terms, such as communication management and corporate communication are often associated with the practice of public relations and integrated marketing communications (Elving, Ruler, Goodman, and Genest, 2012, p. 58). Despite the common use of the term public relations, the definition itself is very diverse (Grunig and Hunt, 1984; Khodarahmi, 2009), however, the vast majority defines public relations as a management (Khodarahmi, 2009), such as the management of communication/communication management (Grunig and Hunt, 1984; Radulescu, 2009; Ruler and Vercic, 2004), management of functions (Cutlip *et. al.*, 2011), reputation management (Radulescu, 2009), and customer relations management (Ledingham, 2003; Phillip, 2006).

The diversity of definitions, said Ruler and Vercic (2004), due to differing opinions about what is public and objectives. In America, the term ‘public’ refers to the ‘publics’ whereas in Europe, the term

'public' refers to the 'public sphere'. The second difference is related to objectives: some says that public relations aims to build relationships and some says it aims to communicate. The author argues that the aim of public relations are both to communicate and to build relationship as it refers to Mulyana (2010) and Ruler and Vercic (2004), it is difficult to distinguish between the concept of relations and communication, because they are overlapping.

After doing some research in 30 European countries, Ruler and Vercic (2004) found that more Europeans were using the term communication management and corporate communication while the term public relations was often used in the United States and internationally. In the book that is according to Skerlep (2001) has been the most widely referred by scholars around the world, *Managing Public Relations*, Grunig and Hunt (1984) defined public relations as a "management of communication between organization and its publics." (p. 6). This definition has been most commonly used in the literatures of public relations (Radulescu, 2009). After researching for 15 years, to 327 organizations in the US, Canada, and the United Kingdom, Grunig and his team used the term of public relations as the same as communication management and both have the same function:

Public relations/communication management is broader than communication technique and broader than specialized public relations programs such as media relations or publicity. Public relations and communication management describe the overall planning, execution, and evaluation of a communication with both external and internal publics-groups that affect the ability of an organization to meet its goals. ...We argue that their specialized role in the process of making those decisions is as communicators. (Grunig, *et. al*, 2002, p. 2).

The above definition is in line with the definition from Elving *et. al*. (2012) that communication management covers all the functions of communication within the organization:

Communication management is the systematic planning, implementing, monitoring, and revision of all the channels of communication within an organization; it also includes the organization and dissemination of new communication directives connected with an organization, network, or communications technology. Aspects of communication management include developing corporate communication strategies, designing internal and external communications directives, and managing the flow of information, including online communication. (pp. 113-114).

The use of the term communication management for public relations is due to the view that public relations is a management of functions in the field of communication that is written in some other literatures, such as Cutlip *et. al*. (2011); Fawkes (2004); Gregory (2010); Heath (2005); Kriyantono (2016b); Lattimore *et. al*. (2010); Seitel (2001); and Smith (2002). Public relations was an area that gave rise to the term corporate communications, namely public relations function for managing communications in order to build a reputation.

"Corporate communication theory is emerging from public relations as practiced by industry and commerce since 1979" (Oliver and Riley, 1996, p. 12), and "In some countries communication management is labeled as corporate communication" (Elving *et. al*, 2012, p. 114).

Some of the literature, such as Murray (2002), does not consider public relations and communication management are entirely the same as the above definitions, however, he still considers both have relevance, at least be a part of communication management or even be used to call public relations. See the statement of Murray (2002, p. 10) below:

Alternative terms such as communication management are often too narrow or imprecise. If, however, PR is conceived of as the management of communication between organizations and their publics, and communication management is used as a synonym for PR, then it is clear that management education does already cover most aspects of communication management, although again not explicitly.

Elving *et al's* (2012) finding about the practice in the Netherlands and the USA, increasingly shows that public relations, communication management, and corporate communications are terms with the same function, namely to make the annual report, brand strategy, communication policy and strategy, community relations, corporate identity, philanthropy (citizenship), crisis and emergency, employee relations, executive speeches, Internet site, Intranet site, issues management, media relations, public relations, crisis communication and reputation management.

Bhisop (2006), after surveying of 175 members of professional associations and trade of water supply industry in the USA, found that the principles of symmetric communication (part of the four models of public relations by Grunig and Hunt, 1984) became the basis of making the effective principles of corporate communications and some tactics used by practitioners are public relations tactics, such as news-releases, newsletters, open-house, and the press conference. Bishop's findings is in line with the opinion of Guru, Manjappa, Radhika, and Dileepkumar (2014) which call the same between communication management with corporate communications, namely to maintain mutually beneficial relationships between management and employees, and between organizations and stakeholders through persuasive two-way dialogs.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The research applied online survey by distributing questionnaires to public relations and *Humas* practitioners as members of in Indonesia (by *e-mail* and social media). The respondents are asked to write in the questionnaire whether they are public relations or *humas* practitioners. Once they are deployed for two months, there were 30 respondents filled the questionnaire: seven public relations managers of business organization and 23 *Humas* managers of government organizations.

Researcher calculates the mean score of the responses. To determine the excellent nature of the practitioners, the benchmark researcher used is the standard for effective organizational communication by Pace and Faules (2005), which is 2.87 points. The practice of public relations is communication practices, which in the context of this research is what was going on in the organization. Therefore, if the practices of public relations are on the level point or less than 2.87, they will be considered as not excellent.

Furthermore, the result of the quantitative data analysis is enriched by the analysis of structured interviews in the questionnaire through open questions. Interview data are used to complement the data previously obtained through questionnaires for later analysis of qualitative data. The results of structured interviews are analysed by categories that have been developed, that is, the ten principles in the Theory of Excellence.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Of the 30 respondents, it is founded that in general the practice of public relations in Indonesia can be categorized as good. After the measurement of the indicators, that is based on 10 excellence principles of the Excellent Theory, *Humas* practitioners gain 4.04 and the mean score of public relations practitioners is at 4:47, therefore, they could be categorized as excellent (Table 1).

**Table 1**  
**The condition of *Humas* and Public relations based on the Excellent Theory**

No.	Statement	Humas Practitioners					Public Relations Practitioners						
		SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS	SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS
<i>A Involvement in Strategic Management</i>		5	4	3	2	1		5	4	3	2	1	
1.	I participate in a management meeting for strategic organizational decision making	15	5	1	2	0	4.34	3	4	0	0	0	4.42
2.	I participate in designing and set the organization's strategic program	9	8	3	1	2	3.91	3	4	0	0	0	4.42
3.	I am satisfied with my involvement in the decision-making process of the organization	7	7	2	1	6	3.34	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
Score							3.86						4.47
<i>B Empowerment of PR in the dominant coalition (top management)</i>		SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS	SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS
4.	I was given the opportunity to submit suggestions for the opinions directly to the top leaders in my organization, associated with the function of communication between organizations and the public	10	10	2	1	0	4.26	6	1	0	0	0	4.85
5.	I was given the opportunity to express the opinions directly to the leadership of another (in the top level management), related to the function of communication between organizations and the public	7	13	3	0	0	4.17	7	0	0	0	0	5.00
6.	I plan and evaluate programs to communicate with the public internal	8	8	0	4	3	3.60	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
7.	I plan and evaluate programs to communicate with external public	13	10	0	0	0	4.56	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
Score							4.14						4.57
<i>C Integrated Functions</i>		SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS	SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS
8.	I have the authority to access information from all lines of the organization	13	9	0	1	0	4.48	5	2	0	0	0	4.71
9.	I have the authority to cooperate with other divisions	17	6	0	0	0	4.74	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
Score							4.62						4.64
<i>D Independent Functions</i>		SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS	SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS
10.	Organization has division of public relations	16	5	2	0	0	4.60	6	1	0	0	0	4.85
11.	Division of public relations is independent and not controlled by other division.	11	6	2	2	2	3.95	4	1	1	1	0	4.14
Score							4.27						4.49

Cont. table 1



No.	Statement	Humas Practitioners						Public Relations Practitioners					
		SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS	SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS
<i>E Managerial Roles</i>													
12.	I identify problems/issues that potentially effects the organization	6	10	5	2	0	3.86	4	2	0	1	0	4.28
13.	I give solutions to the leader by offering programs to deal with issues	7	8	5	2	1	3.78	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
14.	I also implement these programs	9	11	3	0	0	4.26	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
15.	I am communication mediator between organization and internal public, such as employees	5	11	3	3	1	3.69	2	4	1	0	0	4.14
16.	I am communication mediator between organization and external public, such as media and society	11	10	2	0	0	4.39	3	3	0	1	0	4.14
Score							3.99			4.34			
<i>F Symmetric modelbetween organizationand public</i>													
17.	I provide various communication channels for internal public to give feedback (such as complaint, critic, suggestion)	5	8	3	5	2	3.39	2	5	0	0	0	4.28
18.	I provide various communication channels for external public to give feedback (such as complaint, critic, suggestion)	9	13	1	0	0	4.35	5	2	0	0	0	4.71
19.	I response and follow up feedbackfrom internal public, including present it to the leader and other divisions	7	8	4	2	2	3.69	3	4	0	0	0	4.42
20.	I response and follow up feedbackfrom external public, including present it to the leader and other divisions	11	10	2	0	0	4.39	4	3	0	0	0	4.57
21.	I negotiate with internal and external public to gain deal	6	10	2	3	2	3.65	2	4	1	0	0	4.14
Score							3.89			4.42			
<i>G Public relations based on knowledge</i>													
22.	I have knowledge about public relations concepts and theories	7	12	2	1	1	4.00	3	4	0	0	0	4.42
23.	I apply these concepts and theories in my job	8	12	1	1	1	4.09	3	4	0	0	0	4.42
24.	I conducted research before planning and evaluating the programs	6	9	2	4	2	3.56	2	5	0	0	0	4.28
Score							3.88			4.37			
<i>H Symmetricinternal communication</i>													
25.	I create dialogic internal communication system for build cooperation and employees satisfaction	5	7	4	5	2	3.34	3	2	2	0	0	4.14
26.	I ask for advice from work partners for public relations jobs	7	10	3	3	0	3.91	3	4				4.42
Score							3.62			4.33			

*Cont. table 1*

No.	Statement	Humas Practitioners						Public Relations Practitioners					
		SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS	SA	A	NK	D	SD	MS
I	<i>Role diversity</i>												
27.	I don't differ employees/staff from their gender, ethnicity, religion, and race in doing public relations jobs	12	4	1	6	0	3.96	5	2	0	0	0	4.71
28.	All employees/staff have equal responsibility to do public relations jobs	7	8	2	6	0	3.70	5	2	0	0	0	4.71
29.	All employees/staff are involved in decision making about public relations work regardless their gender, ethnicity, race and religion	8	7	1	7	0	3.70	4	2	0	1	0	4.28
	Score						3.70						4.56
J	<i>Code of ethics</i>												
30.	I understand code of ethic of public relations profession	9	12	1	1	0	4.26	4	0	3	0	0	4.14
31.	I put my profession for the public above on my personal interest	11	12	0	0	0	4.48	3	4	0	0	0	4.57
32.	I try to maintain good attitude and behavior in communicating with the public	15	8	0	0	0	4.65	6	1	0	0	0	4.85
	Score						4.46						4.52
	Total Score						4.04						4.47

SA: Strongly agree; A: Agree; NK: Not know; SD: Strongly disagree; D: Disagree; MS: Mean Score

Furthermore, researcher presents the data in the categorical form which can be seen in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**  
**The categorical values of excellent**

No.	Categories/Principles	Score	
		Humas practitioners	Public Relations
A.	Involvement in Strategic Management	3.86	4.47
B.	Empowerment of PR in the dominant coalition ( <i>top management</i> )	4.14	4.57
C.	Integrated Functions	4.62	4.64
D.	Independent Functions	4.27	4.49
E.	Managerial Roles	3.99	4.34
F.	Symmetric model between organization and public	3.89	4.42
G.	Public relations based on knowledge	3.88	4.37
H.	Symmetric internal communication	3.62	4.33
I.	Role diversity	3.70	4.56
J.	Code of ethic	4.46	4.52
	Mean Total	4.04	4.47



Although overall, the practice of both public relations and *Humas* are excellent, the excellence level of public relations practitioners are better than *Humas* practitioners. Public relations practitioners have better score than *Humas* practitioners for all of ten categories/excellent principles. Each categories of public relations practitioners has mean score more than 4.00 while they are only four of ten categories of *Humas*.

It is noted that both of them have the highest mean scores in category C. It means that both *Humas* and public relations practitioners admit that they have the authority to access information from all lines of the organization and to cooperate with other divisions. Table 2 also shows that although the respondents claim *Humas* is at the level of policy makers (the dominant coalition/top management), however, the score of public relations involvement in strategic management is still lower. That is to say, the public relations involve in managerial activities, but is not followed by the involvement in decision-making. *Humas* only have one category/principle which is better than public relations: category D. Public relations practitioners do not have score which is below 4, while *Humas* practitioners have three categories which the scores are under 4. *Humas* also have the lowest score among all categories, i.e. 'role diversity' category. In opposite, the category of 'integrated public relations' has the highest scores, both for practitioners of public relations and *Humas*.

Regarding the research hypothesis, the research is able to prove first hypothesis that the public relations practitioners tend to have a higher level of excellence than *Humas* practitioners. Total score of excellent level of public relations practitioners are 4.47 while *Humas* practitioners have 4.18 score. The second hypothesis, the public relations practitioners tend to perform a managerial role than the *Humas* practitioners, is also proved. The research reveals that public relations practitioners have 4.34 score for managerial role while *Humas* practitioners only have 4.15 score. Furthermore, the research proves the last hypothesis, the public relations practitioners tend to define symmetric communication for internal and external public, while the *Humas* practitioners do it only for external public. In both Symmetric model between organization and public and Symmetric internal communication, public relations practitioners have higher score than *Humas* practitioners.

### **Construction of Public Relations and Public Goals**

To understand the practice of public relations, it should be examined how *Humas*/public relations practitioners perceive public relations tasks in hand. Most respondents construct public relations as an important means for the institution, which serves as a supporting system for the institutions, by creating a conducive organizational climate, creating a public trust, and disseminate information to the media and the public. Data from the open-ended questions, the Head of *Humas* of University of Brawijaya (UB) says

“*Humas* is a strategic role in creating an organizational climate conducive so as to support the goals and vision of the organization.”

The function of support is expressed explicitly related to the functions of higher education by the Head of *Humas* of the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), that is

“to help improve services and education, research, and community service in an effort to achieve quality standards to the world-class universities, to position itself as a supporting system that always support and run a program ranging from the activities of the leadership of the university, faculty, work unit to the students.”

According to the Head of Public relations BadakInc, public relations is “a balancing process to harmonize internal and external relations.”

These answers show that both *Humas*/public relations practitioners directing their activities for the internal and external public. Based on the literature, such as Cutlip *et. al.* (2011); Grunig and Hunt (1984); Lattimore *et. al.* (2010), public relations has two audiences, the internal public, such as employees and leaders, as well as the external public, such as mass media, consumers or other stakeholders. But, is there any implementation balance in the reality? This question can be answered by describing the findings who are the target of *Humas* and public relations practitioners in their public relations activities. If the respondents are consistent with the answer that public relations maintaining the conduciveness of organization, then public relations activities should be balanced between external and internal public.

In fact, most *Humas* practitioners state that the main goal of the activities is media/journalists. Media has been made as the main public by 14 of the 23 *Humas* practitioners, five of them have made leaders as the target of priority, and four *Humas* have made the community as its main public. That is, the priority target of *Humas* practitioners activities were external public rather than the internal public. On the other hand, public relations practitioners focus on both external and internal public. Three respondents have made media and community as the target of priority while four respondents focus on internal public. See how Table 3 shows the balance of *Humas* and public relations practitioners’ priority target, between external and internal public. It is noted that, or internal public, both *Humas* and public relations practitioners focus more on the heads of the organizations.

**Table 3**  
**The public target priority of *Humas* practitioners**

<i>The type of Public</i>	<i>Humas practitioners</i>		<i>Public relations practitioners</i>	
	<i>First Priority</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>First Priority</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>External Public</i>				
Media	14	60.87%	2	28.57%
Community	4	17.39%	1	14.29%
NGO	0			
Government	0			
Consumers	0			
Total	18	(78.26%)	3	(42.86%)
<i>Internal Public</i>				
Leaders/Shareholders	5	21.74%	3	42.85%
Employees	0		1	14.29%
Total	5	(21.74%)	4	(57.14%)
	23	100%	7	100%

Why is media as first priority? Theoretically, the media needs public relations to obtain news material that is effective, efficient, attractive and informative to the public while public relations requires journalists as an audience, mediator and a gatekeeper to inform and respond to the public need to know and public relations service is to build a positive image (Kriyantono, 2016a; Lattimore *et. al.*, 2010).

“Media relations are important programs conducted by public relations. The reason will be that the public relations needs a communication process to make-relation that they could obtain their goals to develop, guide, and keep a positive image or good reputation.” (Syahri, Kriyantono, and Nasution, 2015).

Data in the field reinforce this theoretical explanation, which is the reason why the media mostly become the target of public relations programs. The respondents’ statements also link to questioner that *Humas* practitioners have lower score in providing communication channel for internal public rather than public relations practitioners.

### **Position Structural and Decision-Making Process**

Due to the public relations positions in the institutional structure, the Excellence Theory explains that public relations is effective if

- (a) public relations has its own part, that is to say, not combined with division/section to another, even subordinated by other divisions;
- (b) the public relations department is included into the upper structure (dominant coalition);
- (c) public relations involves in the decision-making process in the dominant coalition.

Data in the field show that there is a difference that the Excellence Theory is not applied as the same as the standard of public relations effectiveness in Western countries. In this study, related to the effectiveness, researcher only focuses on measuring the respondent’s perspective and not on the perspective of the public, according to the purposes of this study that was parsing the Head of Public Relations Office responses.

There are no differences related to the independence of division. Both *Humas* and public relations practitioners recognize there is public relations division that stands alone and there is division under the coordination of other divisions. Stand-alone *Humas* means *Humas* division is directly responsible to the top leaders. However, researcher has found that all respondents admit not being in upper structure. Although not included in upper structure, respondents from stand-alone division claim to be involved in the decision making process in the leadership meeting. They claim the opportunity to submit suggestions directly to the opinion of the highest leadership in the institution. For practitioners of *Humas* and public relations divisions under the coordination of the other division, they admit for being under the marketing division or Human Resources Development.

The direct position of public relations division responsibility to the leadership, although it is not structurally high, making it easier to do public relations functions. These findings are interesting, if it is associated with the Excellence Theory, which said that public relations will be effective if it is able to perform its function properly and this function is achieved if public relations is in the upper structure (dominant coalition). Opportunities to engage in decision-making meeting and having direct access to the chairman would be great if it was at that position (Grunig *et. al.*, 2002).

### **Construction of the Ability of Public Relations**

The study also explores the construction of the respondents about the ability that should be possessed by public relations practitioners in order to carry out its function. Theoretically, the ability of public relations can be grouped into two categories, they are the managerial capability of communication and the ability of

the communications technician. Managerial capability is the ability to identify issues and problems (expert prescriber), mediator or facilitate two-way communication reciprocity between agencies and the public (communication facilitator), and problem solving facilitator, which is helping leaders solve problems and oversee the implementation of problem solving. The ability of the communications technician, is the ability in communication techniques such as writing press releases, writing speeches, public speaking or graphic design (Grunig *et. al.*, 2002; Lattimore *et. al.*, 2010). According to Excellence Theory, the greater the chance of public relations are in an upper structure position, involved in the decision-making, and get direct access, the greater the chances of the public relations to perform managerial tasks. In other words, the managerial task is a demand that public relations should do if it wants to be positioned on the upper structure and are involved in decision making of the institution (Grunig *et. al.*, 2002; Kriyantono, 2014a; Lattimore, *et. al.*, 2007).

Researcher asks respondents to rank the capabilities most needed. All respondents more focus on managerial skills. *Humas* practitioners of UPI, for example, focus on technical ability rather than managerial, with the ranking of the following capabilities: network with media and social institutions, provides the latest information, fostering a harmonious relationship with stakeholders, able to identify problems and solutions, and able to maximize the capacity of techniques and strategy, *Humas* practitioner of UB ranks as follows: leadership skills, communication strategies, communication planning, human resource management, and rhetoric skill. Public relations practitioner of Badak Inc calls leadership skills, networking, social analysis and media analysis, authorship, public speaking as the ranking of public relations capabilities. While the public relations practitioner of Atria Hotel calls the main capabilities of public relations is to update the development of technology, social media, capable of being a spokesman for the company's media, sensitive to the issues that are happening both inside or outside the company, responsive to the completion of the issue, creatively approach to new things that would be done.

If it is associated with structural position of public relations, there are interesting findings. Most certainly have proved the Excellence Theory, respondents who have a part of its own and not under the coordination of the other part, admit that the main ability was the ability of managerial public relations while *Humas* that do not have a separate section calling on the top-ranked technical capabilities. However, the data in the field do not prove the principle of Excellence Theory, namely, managerial tasks correlated with the position of public relations in the upper structure, because all the *Humas* in this study, are not on the top of the structure, but most claim to have and do managerial duties.

### Managerial Duties Performed Type

Researcher is also exploring the kinds of managerial tasks that have been performed by the respondents in this study. Respondents are asked to construct this experience in managerial duties. *Humas* practitioner of UB states that he attends a meeting led to the strategic organization decision making, given the opportunity to submit suggestions for their opinions directly to the top leaders in their organization, associated with the function of communication between the organization and the public, design and set up a strategic program of the organization, but he recognizes less satisfied with their involvement in the decision making process. There is an interesting relationship between respondents' answers. Most *Humas* practitioners admit involved in the decision making, however, the majority admit less satisfied with the quality of their engagement. If it is associated with the construction of respondents related to the structural position of public relations,

the researcher concludes this condition influenced by the structure that is not at the top level in the institution. Another managerial assignments that researcher obtained from the respondents, among other things: identify problems, participated engage in problem solving and open channels of two-way communication.

### **Constraints of Public Relations**

This study has found that public relations practice is going well, based on the construction of respondents. From the field data, researcher finds that most respondents have set the dialogic internal communication system to build cooperation, improve morale and job satisfaction of all employees in the institution, respond and act on feedback given by external public, including the follow ups to the chairman and other divisions related, and provide a channel of communication in various forms so that the external public can give feedback on the institution. On the other hand, the study also able to explore the various constraints faced by *Humas*/public relations practitioners. In general, *Humas* practitioners feel that the perception of the public relations function needs to be improved more positive. A less positive perception of this led to some constraints, such as the unclear duties, organizational structure that have not yet put public relations in a strategic position to bureaucratization constraint. Public relations practitioners do not face these constraints. However, both the *Humas* and public relations practitioners feel the constraints of lack of human resources and lack of coordination. The respondents still expect a better role performed by leaders related to the respondents' duties as communications manager at the institute. UB *Humas* practitioner, for example, says that

“the lack of understanding of the leaders on how it should be run by the public relations function fully. I hope the leaders really understand it.”

Data in the field also find that the institutional structure of public relations is quite varied. There are practitioners that are in a structure that allows direct access to policy makers, but there are also practitioners that does not have clear authority functions. This situation is a problem because the actual process of public relations is a universal function in the public service system so that the function of public relations must be even and have the same performance indicators.

### **Building Proposition**

This research may eventually build several propositions. The propositions are built based on the tendency of the relationship patterns between data. The nature of the truth of the propositions are limited to the context of the study, while in the broader context, the propositions remain to be tested again by bigger amount of respondents, so the level of generalizations can be guaranteed. From the results of the study, researcher expresses some propositions, as follows:

1. The public relations practitioners tend to have a balance of public priority objectives, namely internal and external, rather than *Humas* practitioners.
2. The public relations practitioners tend to be more excellent than *Humas* practitioner.
3. If *Humas*/public relations was at a high structural position, they tend to perform managerial tasks.
4. In order to be involved in decision-making and direct access to the top leaders, *Humas*/public relations does not need to be in a high structural position.

5. Managerial ability is increasingly felt in *Humas*/public relations that has its own part.
6. There is no difference of main target between the public relations in charge of managerial and communication technician.
7. *Humas* practitioner is faced on obstacles about less positive perception of the leader on the public relations function rather than public relations practitioner, however, the two practitioners are both facing the lack of qualified human resources and lack of coordination.

Of the seven propositions generated associated with Excellent Theory, proposition 3 and 5 are the propositions that affirm the principles of the theory, which will be effective if it had a public relations department, became part of the dominant coalition (top structure), and are not subordinate to the other parts. Meanwhile, proposition number 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 are typical conditions that occur in the practice of public relations in Indonesia. Based on the theoretical study noted earlier, public relations goal should be aimed to internal and external public. The more the public relations work on managerial duties then tends to happen the balance between internal and external public. This further strengthens the assumption that the truth remains to be done through a more comprehensive scientific study, as presented by Huang-Horowitz (2012) and McQuail (2000), it is still possible that there are some principles which they adopted, which is not the whole principle. Data in the field show, both of which perform managerial tasks and communications technician, the tendency has been more focused on the mass media.

The above situation can be explained from several of the following literature review. *Humas* and journalists are two professions that are interconnected in the context of accessibility and dissemination of information and it should happen a symbiotic mutualism between them (Kriyantono, 2014). Journalists need a publicist to acquire news material that is effective, efficient, attractive and informative to the public while public relations requires journalists as an audience, mediator and a gatekeeper to provide information and respond to the public needs to know (Lattimore, *et. al.*, 2010). For journalists, the most authoritative source for information about the organization is the public relations of the organization. This information is disseminated widely and simultaneously so as to have the ability to create public opinion (Kim, Han, Shanahan, and Berdayes, 2004; Scheufele and Moy, 2000).

## CONCLUSION

This study has described the public relations activities in Indonesia. The research has proven some hypotheses that the 'public relations' practitioners tend to have a higher level of excellence than '*Humas*' practitioners, the 'public relations' practitioners tend to perform a managerial role than '*Humas*' practitioners, and the 'public relations' practitioners tend to define symmetric communication for internal and external public, while '*Humas*' practitioners do it only for external public.

Furthermore, the research has resulted in several propositions, for example, if public relations practitioners were on a high structural position, they tend to perform managerial task; in order to be involved in decision-making and get direct access to the top leaders, public relations should not necessarily be in a high structural position; managerial capabilities are increasingly felt in public relations that has its own part or division; and there is no difference of main target between the public relations in charge of managerial duties and communication technician. In general, in this era of public disclosure, public relations practice in Indonesia that become the object of this study can be quite good, with a system of two-way



communication between public relation officers and the internal public also with the media. However, there are some issues that could potentially make the effectiveness of public relations practice diminished they are the lack of human resources, the lack of leadership to provide human resources, and the public relations structure that is varied even not at the level which enables them to engage in the institution decision-making.

The research findings have confirmed that not all principles of The Excellent Theory can be applied universally. Some principles are adjusted or applied differently in Indonesian contexts. There are five propositions about similarities and inequalities application of The Excellence Theory in Indonesia and West, which means, some of the theory principles can be universally applicable. However, some other principles are only applicable in Indonesian context. This study has limitations related to several things, they are:

1. the level of data generalization cannot be done thoroughly because the number of respondents were only thirty persons;
2. since this study used questionnaires distributed online it is possible that this still not comprehensively describe the actual conditions.

Therefore, for further research, data collection techniques need to be done by in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in order to parse the data more thoroughly. Despite its limitations on the generalization, this study is expected to be a pilot project to encourage further research in the future.

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