

Public Relations Management Concept of ATLU (Asking, Telling, Listening, and Understanding) in Public Communication Implementation at PTNBH, a Study in Universitas Padjadjaran

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Abstract – PTNBH (*Perguruan Tinggi Berbadan Hukum or Higher Educational State Institution with Legalized Body*) is a concept of managing higher education institution in state universities, which has autonomous status to regulate themselves. This autonomous right for higher education is written in Government Rule no.58 year 2013, article 1, verse 3, which states that state higher education developed by government has an autonomous status as legal subject to establish a prominent quality for higher education.

The problems occur in three aspects of governance, resources, and financial. Those three aspects will support the program implementation of PTNBH. As an independent institution, PTNBH is required not to rely on its students' tuition fee for financial income. In principle, PTNBH management is a collective responsibility, nevertheless, the role of universities as morale power in reformation of higher education is often not understood comprehensively.

The success of PTNBH concept is reflected from the mutual understanding on value, substance, current concept change norm, benefit of electing PTNBH concept, uniformed definition of autonomous concept of PTNBH, on every individual in a particular university. The implementation of ATLU (Asking, Telling, Listening, and Understanding) is one of the key to obtain the result of PTNBH accomplishment. In this research, particularly explores the unique ATLU pattern for Universitas Padjadjaran.

Research will apply qualitative method on descriptive study by the use of interviews, literature study, and observation. Informants for this research is determined by purposive sampling technique with triangulation as validity data check.

Keywords – Management, Public Relations, Public Communication, PTNBH

I. INTRODUCTION

PTNBH (*Perguruan Tinggi Berbadan Hukum or Higher Educational State Institution with Legalized Body*) is a concept of managing higher education institution in state universities, which has autonomous status to regulate themselves with a sole purpose to give their independent in their internal management. PTNBH is a solution chosen by the government of Indonesia to clarify status of universities with a status previously known as BHMN (*Badan Hukum Milik Negara or State Owned Legal Body*). This is caused by the termination of Law no.9/2009 on BHP (*Badan Hukum Pendidikan or Education Legal Body*) by constitutional court, which practically leaves State owned BHMN has no legal status whatsoever. Consequently, Government Rule no.61/1999 on the stipulation of State Owned Higher Education as a legal body is no longer valid after Government Rule no.7/2010 on management of Education is being implemented.

The term higher education with legal body was first mentioned in article 65 verse 1 of Law no. 12/2012, as autonomous management of higher education can be selectively given based on performance evaluation by minister (of education) to state owned university by implementing financial management pattern of public service institution or by establishing PTNBH concept to generate a higher education with distinguished quality. Article 65 above indicates that a state-owned university with PTNBH status, would be provided an independency in organizing higher education to establish a high-quality education. PTNBH concept as a higher education system is stated in Government Law no..12/2012 article 76

on higher education. PTNBH provides an independency in managing higher education institution in financial, infrastructure, and workforce aspects

Currently, there are 11 state-owned universities with PTNBH status, which includes: Universitas Indonesia, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Institut Pertanian Bogor, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Universitas Airlangga, Universitas Padjadjaran, Universitas Diponegoro, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh November, and Universitas Hasanudin. Although, problem arise in the implementation, such as lack of understanding on value/substance/norm on change, and ambiguous perception on PTNBH application, which susceptible to authorization and rules misconduct. The lack of public communication management in building a common understanding on the benefit of the change on university, government, and legislative level are the reason of this occurring problem.

Some of the cases of inappropriate implementation of autonomy, which harm the stakeholders' benefit take place in several universities. In Universitas Indonesia case, the financial management autonomy resulting in the high tuition fee paid by students, which in turn generate a rally against it. Some points in Government Law no.12/2012 article 63 clearly stated that PTNBH able to manage autonomously in every policy that being implemented, business unit establishment, and the obligation in financial accountability and transparency. Nevertheless, it does not mean creating an education commercialisation by setting a higher tuition fee is permitted, it contradicts with article 4 that regulates on PTNBH as provider of an affordable education for the public.

Some neighbouring countries has encountered the same problem. Malaysia for example, a research by Fauziah Md Taib et.al on Governance Reforms in Public Universities of Malaysia, conveys that Malaysia has done a reformation in higher education sector. The National Higher Education Strategic Plan (NHESP, 2020) and National Higher Education Plan (NHEAP, 2007-2010) are the blueprint in higher education transformation in Malaysia. This strategic plan provides a bigger autonomy for state universities dynamically and competitively.

In early 2012, Universiti Malaya (UM), University Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) receive an autonomy, which converted to full autonomy in 2015. Based on 10 years Malaysia Plan, it is predicted that there are many state universities that fulfilled the requirements to receive autonomy status. Unfortunately, the lack of empirical study on the

effect of higher education reformation in Malaysia and the disputed matter on the implementation higher education management after the transformation resulted in a hindered progress of reformation plan.

In East Asia, a movement on decentralization of higher education management has started in mid-90s, with South Korea and Malaysia setting up the movement followed by Indonesia and Thailand. The second wave of the movement happened in mid 2000, Japan and Singapore expanded the autonomy of their state-owned universities. Those facts illustrate on how autonomy for state universities are recently developed in East Asia as those state-owned universities are given an independence in managing their own program, curriculum, and students' intake policy.

Public relations unit in those universities is the one that has responsibility to develop relationship with their public by the use of appropriate public relations management strategy of ATLU (Asking, Telling, Listening, and Understanding). This is connected to how stakeholders of those state-owned universities is being well informed on the autonomy matters. This research is focusing on Universitas Padjadjaran in which ATLU being implemented that will resulted in a unique pattern of ATLU for Universitas Padjadjaran.

The study is the first step in establishing a better policy in implementing PTNBH concept by communicating it to public with a proper channel. Public communication itself is an activity of delivering messages towards internal and external public of an organization by the use of either face to face or mediated channel. The purpose is to deliver information for relevant public and develop a good relationship between organization/company and its public internally or externally.

II. METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive method with qualitative approach. Descriptive method according to [1] is merely a description on a particular situation or event. Thus this research exploring on PTNBH implementation in Universitas Padjadjaran by describing the situations and events and constructing analysis by using ATLU Public Relations management.

[2] states that in qualitative studies there are some data collection techniques such as: interview and documentation study. The interviews are done with Director of Management and Public Communication of Universitas Padjadjaran, and Head of BEM (Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa or Student Executive Body). Documentation is done by using literature review, online data or related books in order to finalize analysis and discussion for this research.

The purpose of this research is to explore the Asking, Telling, Listening, and Understanding (ATLU) activities by Public Relations of Universitas Padjadjaran in communication towards the public.

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Public communication in PTNBH is a planned and persuasive communication activity carried out by public relations of PTNBH in order to inform and be responsive towards its public. One of the communication concept being implemented is ATLU (Asking, Telling, Listening, and Understanding) as explained in [3]. Process and aspect of Public Relations management from ATLU concept has four stages, which is needed to develop and implement public relations activity in accordance with the policy from Board of Trustees and stakeholders (staffs, students, general public, government etc.).

Universitas Padjadjaran through Directorate of Management and Public Communication /International Office has implemented the "Asking" stage to find, dig, and identified data and facts from the field. One of the event that being focused on is the meeting of Board of Trustee, which consists of Academic Senate, Alumni representation, Education Staffs, and general public including ex-officio member West Java Governor Ahmad Heryawan and Rector of Universitas Padjadjaran Prof. Tri Hanggono Achmad. Current head of Board of Trustee is Minister of Communication and Information of Republic of Indonesia, Rudiantara in the 2015-2020 period.

"Asking" activity has active and reactive characteristics that means it will not need to wait for the report but rather focus on gaining information straight from the field. All the findings are then processed and identified with a detail on occurring main problems and the causes, along with the involved parties, where and when, and other details that would be able to complete data seeking process.

In previous statute, students and general public do have representatives in Board of Trustee. The observation on this particular matter needs to dig deeper than the surface and more understanding on how students and general public tend to speak as it is, honest, and without any strings attached. The equal understanding and perception should be done in order to filtered all the problems and facts needed by university. Triangulation result shows that students and general public have not reach the understanding on the existence of PTNBH and never been invited in the forum.

The second activity is "telling" whereas public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran has a role to communicate ongoing and future activities of PTNBH. In psychology concept, communicator in the communication process is considered to be a success by displaying himself/herself as credible

source (source credibility) for his/her communicant. Holland and Weiss in [1] suggest that ethos as credibility consists of two elements: expertise and trustworthiness. Those two elements must be possessed by communicator in order to be consider as credible. Head of Public Relations of Universitas Padjadjaran has two of those elements, which is why he is being chosen and trusted by Rector of Universitas Padjadjaran and Board of Trustee.

"Telling" activity implemented by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran on PTNBH is by creating Socialization of Public Information Openness in General Purpose Hall, Building 1, third floor, Universitas Padjadjaran Dipatiukur campus on Friday 19th of May. This activity is joined by some of the Vice Dean of Planning, Resources, and Management, and some of the managers from some of the faculties in Universitas Padjadjaran, with some additional participants from other higher education institution.

The meeting discussed some of the policies as the framework of PTNBH, including: quality improvement on education, research, and innovation in Indonesia. Added by recommendation by Ministry of Research and Higher Education on the importance of international publication (journals) for higher education institution in Indonesia.

Some of the media for this activity are printed, electronic, and social media. All the relevant media needed for the socialization of PTNBH implementation are being used by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran, including face to face communication and seminar.

"Listening" is as important as other elements of ATLU as it is not easy to be a good listener. According to Communication Psychologist, to become an effective listener must gone through an intensive training and effort. A good listener is the one who would be able to understand main ideas of a speaker, and avoiding interference from the surroundings by fully concentrated when listening to a speaker.

Feedback is crucial in public relations management as it is needed to rehabilitate and future planning. Feedback will come in a form of suggestion, critics, information, support, even rejection, which all should be listened by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran in order to gain all input for future references.

The listening element in public communication of PTNBH by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran is done by organizing discussion forums with stakeholders as participants. Face to face meeting is considered to be more effective in receiving information on some occurring problems as it has a direct characteristic and would be able to receive a direct response unless more detailed work needs to be done. "Listening" as a way of gaining information is also

being received through media relations and media monitoring.

“Understanding” is the main purpose of public relations activity, which is to reach equal understanding and perception. Jeffkins in [4] suggests that public relations is all planned communication for internal and external of an organization and all its public to achieve specific targets based on mutual understanding.

In managerial’s point of view, public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran is responsible for the significant implementation of relationship between Universitas Padjadjaran with all its stakeholders, including government, students, lecturers, and general public. Public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran is the connecting bridge and an orchestrator of harmonious relationship between Universitas Padjadjaran and its stakeholder. Mutual understanding between Universitas Padjadjaran and its stakeholders would create a beneficial cooperation for both parties.

“Understanding” element in the implementation of public communication of PTNBH is by organizing socialization in a more intensive way towards all the public, internally and externally, which has either direct or indirect relation towards Universitas Padjadjaran.

Conversely, the triangulation results show that stakeholders’ (especially students and lecturers) understanding on PTNBH is developed by exploring the definition and implementation of PTNBH through their own searching on various data sources or media. Thus, it creates the different perception between Universitas Padjadjaran and its stakeholders, which generates prejudice and suspicion on the implementation of PTNBH that considered to be only beneficial for university and government.

IV. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that: (1) “Asking” activity is the activity set by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran to search, dig, and identified data and fact from the field. One of the activity is focusing on the meeting of Board of Trustee, which members consist of Academic senate, alumni representation, educational staffs, and general public including ex-officio. (2) “Telling” activity implemented by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran on PTNBH is by creating Socialization of Public Information Openness in General Purpose Hall, Building 1, third floor, Universitas Padjadjaran Dipatiukur campus on Friday 19th of May. This activity is joined by some of the Vice Dean of Planning, Resources, and Management, and some of the managers from some of the faculties in Universitas Padjadjaran, with some additional participants from other higher education institution. (3) The listening element in public communication of PTNBH by public relations of Universitas Padjadjaran is done by organizing discussion forums with stakeholders as participants. Face to face meeting is considered to be more

effective in receiving information on some occurring problems as it has a direct characteristic and would be able to receive a direct response unless more detailed work needs to be done. “Listening” as a way of gaining information is also being received through media relations and media monitoring. (4) “Understanding” element in the implementation of public communication of PTNBH is by organizing socialization in a more intensive way towards all the public, internally and externally, which has either direct or indirect relation towards Universitas Padjadjaran

V. SUGGESTION

As per triangulations result that shows some of the stakeholders especially students and lecturers receive their understanding on the implementation of PTNBH through various media rather than those activities created by Public Relations of Universitas Padjadjaran. It creates a different perception on the implementation of PTNBH, which support the suggestion of having more intensive approach on stakeholders, especially students and lecturers by setting up a periodical meeting.

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