

*Practices for Public Relations Effectiveness in Education and Social Justice  
within and across Borders*

Maya Diah Nirwana, Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia

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**Abstract**

The effectiveness of Public Relations (PR) depends on good planning. Good planning is the best way to practice preventive action rather than remedial PR. Tactical and strategic plans help PR coordinate its efforts with those of other areas of the organization (Baskin, et al, 1997, p. 129). This study focuses on the PR practices at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP), Universitas Brawijaya (UB) for education and social justice programs within and across borders. Indonesia has 34 provinces with different cultures and religions. The implementation of the education programs should be supported by the Indonesian Government policy, especially to build social justice. It has become significant ever since the number 5 of Pancasila (as Indonesian Country Basic) has notified that social justice must be ensured for all Indonesian citizens. This study uses the method of qualitative research. The technique of data collection has been through interviews and observation. The researcher has used the domain and taxonomy analysis as the data analysis technique.

Result of this study: (1) The practices for PR effectiveness in FISIP UB heavily stresses on social justice. It means that all Indonesian citizens can access the faculty's website to enroll at FISIP UB. (2) In order to implement word class faculty, every stakeholder has the same opportunities in experiencing the benefits of both the domestic and the international educational environment. (3) Developing PR practices to reach the goals can be started from Management by Objectives as management plans and by conducting campaigns or project budgets.

Keywords: PR, effectiveness, education, social justice

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## Introduction

Indonesia has a large area with many natural resources. Indonesia is located in the equatorial area. Indonesia has the aim of making social justice and welfare as the national ideals. Higher education can support these national ideals through public relations. Practices of PR is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequence, counseling the organization leader, and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization and the public interest. To employ social justice in education, we can implement cross-border mobility. Cross-border mobility of students is a core component of the internationalization of higher education (Li and Bray, 2007, p. 2).

Social justice in education has to be realized in accordance with the dynamism of social change. We argue that teaching social justice or what we call “good and just teaching,” reflects an essential purpose of teaching in a democratic society in which the teacher is an advocate for students whose work supports larger efforts for social change (Cochran, et al, 2008, p. 1).

Enrolling students with special needs is very significant in higher education. It becomes evident that higher education employ social justice. The Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) declare:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning,
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,
- Education systems should be designed and educational programs implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs,
- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs (in Wahab, p. 4).

Public relations program in social justice should be made effective. There are some processes in a public relations program, starting from fact finding through research, planning, implementation, to evaluation. The various missions that public relations in higher education aim to achieve are: 1). building a positive image, 2). creating synergy communication between higher education and society, 3) building responsive institution toward society dynamism (Satlita, p. 1).

Indonesia has 34 provinces with different cultures, languages, ethnics, and religions. There are many higher educational institutions in Indonesia. The focus of this study has been the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) Universitas Brawijaya (UB). The motto of this university is “building-up noble future”. According to Nirwana and Illahi (2015, p. 313), even today the role and function of public relations is growing considerably so much so that nowadays public relations practitioners are able to hold and carry out management activities. It is known as the public relations management.

Planning effective public relations strategies is a challenging job. It is more than just compiling newsletters, putting up a Web site, or writing newspaper articles. Being a public relations director means building relationships with community members by informing and involving them as much as possible with school programs (Carlsmith

and Jennifer, 2001, p. 18).

There are many roles that PR plays in higher education. Especially in education and social justice programs, PR can be an expert prescriber, communication facilitator, communication technician, and problem solver. According to Higgins (1983, p. 25) in Savio (1992, p. 2), PR plays a central role in strategic planning of higher education. Universities look to public relations units to manage crises, boost rankings, increase donations, and carry out a variety of other tasks (Hirsh & Weber, 1999; Spagnolia, 1998). University public relations units are practicing public relations in order to see whether their practices are excellent (Source: Public Relations in Higher Education).

FISIP UB is one of the most popular Faculty in UB. The number of candidates who wanted to join FISIP UB in the year 2015 was 18,831 out of which only 1.292 could become FISIP UB students. The social justice programs of FISIP UB in education across borders can be seen implemented by every stakeholder. They have the same opportunities in experiencing the domestic and the international educational environment.

With six undergraduate programs, three postgraduate programs and internationally reputable lecturers, the Faculty is committed to contribute to the society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research, which is mostly based on local wisdom at the highest international level of excellence. In addition, it has realized that as a higher educational institution FISIP UB has an obligation to serve the community. Therefore, it conducts many community services that really meet the stakeholders' needs.

Even though the Faculty is relatively new, yet it has a very enthusiastic, optimistic, and ambitious staff. It believes that qualified education and research, as well as proper community services can change the world for the better. All these efforts could contribute not only for building up an academic society but also for the society in general.

The department is confident about its dedicated staff, regularly reviewed curriculum based on the global changes, nationally and internationally well-known lectures as well as researchers.

In the future, the public relations professionals will not only be skilled as communicators but leaders who will help their organizations build and maintain relationships with publics. They will fulfill the dual roles of managing communication as well as counseling the top management (Commission on Public Relations Education, 1999, p. 12). This paper explores the practices of PR effectiveness in education and social justice within and across border. It will explain the practices of PR in FISIP UB. This paper will explore the PR activities of FISIP UB in Indonesia and overseas in accordance with education and social justice programs.

## **Method**

The method that this research has employed is that of qualitative approach. This study uses interviews and observations as its mode of data collection. Interviews are one of the most fundamental techniques researchers use to get information (Berger, 2000, p. 125). Data analysis techniques as used by this research are that of domain and taxonomy.

Ethnographer James Spradley developed the method for domain analysis - an innovative and comprehensive approach for analyzing qualitative data. Spradley defined the basic unit in a cultural setting as a domain, an organizing idea or concept. Domains are later combined into taxonomies and broader themes to provide an overall interpretation of a cultural scene or social setting. (Newman, 2000, p. 429).

The researcher has divided its area of research into nine domains for analyzing the data. These consist of variants, spatial, cause-effect, rational or reasons, location to do something, procedure to reach something, function, steps, attribute or characteristic.

## **Result and Discussion**

The researcher has collected data by using the domains, namely: (1) Variant of PR practices, (2) Space for PR practices, (3) Cause-Effect from PR practices, (4) Reason for education and social justice, (5) Location for practicing PR policies, (6) Procedure to reach FISIP goals, (7) Function of PR in FISIP UB, (8) Steps of PR practices, and (9) Characteristic of PR practices. Given below is the explanation for each domain:

1. The Variant of practices for Public Relations Effectiveness in Education and Social Justice program in FISIP UB:

Developing PR practices to reach the goals can be started from MBO (Management by Objectives as management plans); and continued through effective campaigns or project budgets. Paisley (1981, p. 24) notes that the definitions of a campaign stress either on (1) the intention, or (2) the process of the campaign.

The action of FISIP UB in the education and social justice program within and across borders is publicized by advertising it through its website, radio and television programs, bulletins, brochures, and posters. A website can be a very effective way to market a school and to communicate to the community if it is designed to meet the needs of those who will use it the most (Carlsmith and Jennifer, 2001, p. 10).



Figure 1: Website of FISIP UB (www.fisip.ub.ac.id)

Creating WebPages serve as public communication. One can place data into a global communication context through the Hypertext Markup Language (HTML). Adams and Clark (2001, p. 198) notify that HTML advances human communication in so many ways that we cannot fathom the full impact yet. When the department's data is showcased via HTML in the global village that is the Web, the entire range of human experience becomes mediated into a public consciousness.

Everyone who fulfills enrollment requirements can join in for a regular or an English class at FISIP UB. Campaign or project budget is covering Campaign about curriculum and course description for regular and English classes at the Department of Communication and Study program of International Relations and distributing and socializing guidebook of undergraduate thesis writing, guidebook of internship, dissertation writing guidelines; distributing and sharing result of academic works. For example one could look after the process of scientific lecture.

Education and social justice programs enhance the faculty's reputation. FISIP UB has employed visiting lecturers not only from the developed countries but also from the developing countries. PR in FISIP UB gives high attention to increase the effectiveness of education and social justice programs within and across borders.

## 2. Space for PR practices

PR of FISIP UB has been using its social justice program not only in Indonesia but also in overseas education. It means that the PR of FISIP UB aims at conducting education and social justice within and across borders.

Education and Social Justice through Cross-border mobility:

- Cross-border mobility of students is a core component of the internationalization of higher education (Li and Bray, 2007, p. 2). Some strategies employed by FISIP UB to create cross border mobility is by starting an English class for the Department of Communication and International Relations Study Program, and welcoming international students for short courses.
- We argue that teaching for social justice, or what we call “good and just teaching,” reflects an essential purpose of teaching in a democratic society in which the teacher is an advocate for students whose work supports larger efforts for social change. (Cochran, et al, 2008, p. 1).

### 3 . Cause-Effect of PR practices

FISIP UB employs its education and social justice program to enjoy some long-term benefits. Public relations effectiveness in higher education helps in building positive image, synergy communication between higher education and society, and building responsive institution toward society dynamism. PR effectiveness in FISIP UB can be shown by building positive image for 9 study programs, namely: sociology, communication, psychology, international relations, political science, governmental studies, and postgraduate programs (master of communication, master of social science), and doctoral in sociology. All the activities of the study programs must be in line with the education and social justice programs. FISIP UB has a social responsibility towards its Education and Social Justice Within and Across Borders program. FISIP UB also facilitates scholarship for poor students. FISIP UB undertakes many interactions with all the provinces in Indonesia and indulges in cooperative mechanisms with some of the countries from 4 continents. FISIP UB distributes proportional job description for academic stakeholders. FISIP UB improves education quality by paying attention to education and social justice. The goal of this program is to maintain the ethos of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in diversity) and to reach world-class faculty.

Practices of PR Effectiveness in FISIP UB: 1) its students can go to many provinces and overseas, to be a part of domestic or international competitions, 2) FISIP UB supports all the students by giving achievement motivation training, 3) it support all the programs and on top of that public relations inform faculty financial resource management. From PR of FISIP UB activities, it has garnered a positive image by making the faculty more popular in Indonesia and some other countries who have offered to cooperate with this faculty.

### 4. Reasons for doing an education and social justice program.

FISIP UB supports the national ideals of Indonesia to propagate social justice and welfare.

### 5. Location for its PR practices

The PR of FISIP UB has been employing its PR practices in education and social justice in Indonesia and the overseas.

## 6. Procedure to reach the goals

PR of FISIP UB has been doing PR effectiveness. Here the level of PR effectiveness in FISIP UB according Yardstick.

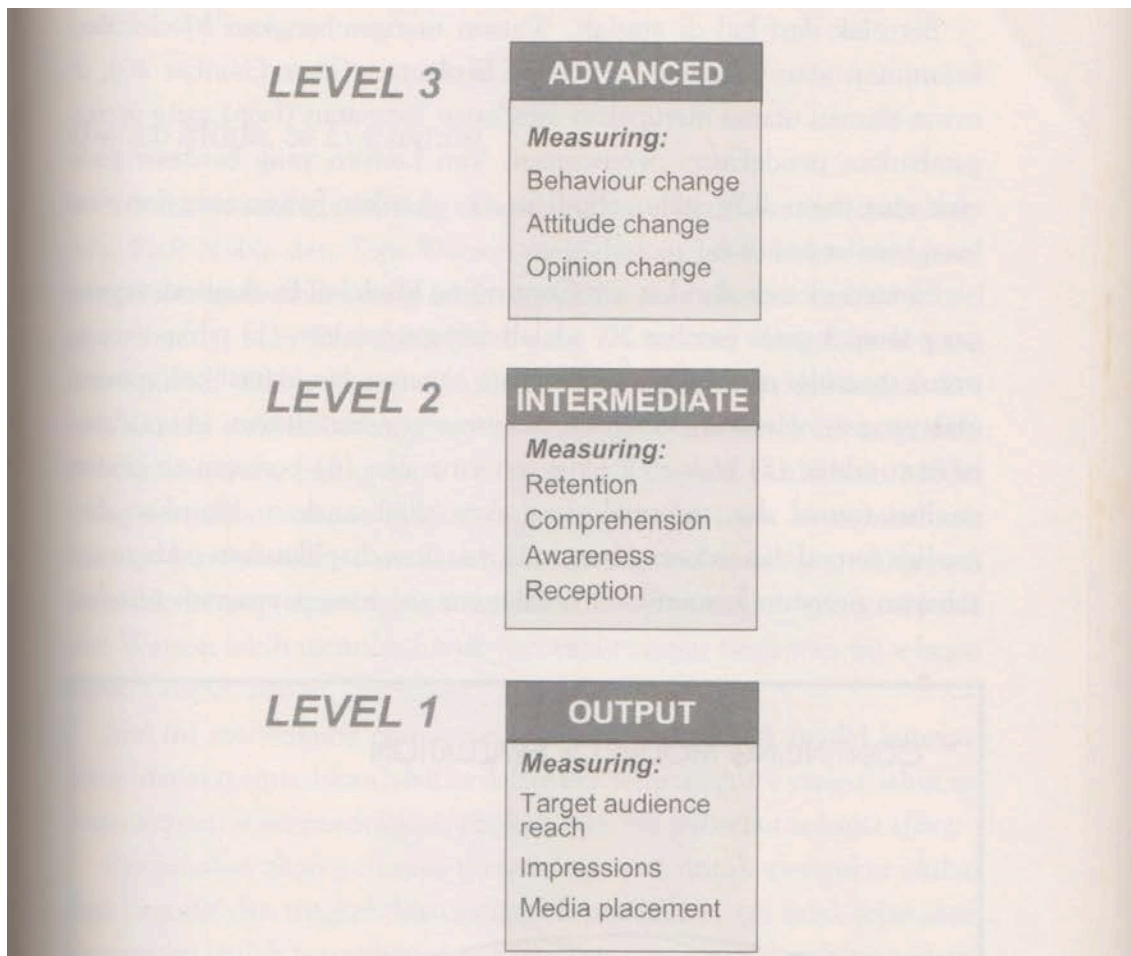


Figure 2: PR Effectiveness Yardstick  
Source: Liendenmann, (1993) in Wasesa (2015, p. 1993).

### **Practices for PR effectiveness in education and social justice in FISIP UB**

#### LEVEL 1: OUTPUT

Measuring: Target audience reach (stakeholders of FISIP UB).

Impressions: satisfaction

Media Placement: official website, radio and TV, bulletin, brochure, leaflet, poster, and guidebook.

#### LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE

Measuring:

Retention: Through database of FISIP UB.

Comprehension: To reach world class Faculty.

Awareness: Attention to education and social justice

Reception: Supporting for education and social justice programs.

### LEVEL 3: ADVANCED

Measuring:

Behavior Change: All stakeholders have tolerance

Attitude Change: Supporting unity in diversity

Opinion Change: FISIP UB become multicultural  
Faculty (positive image)

#### 7. Function of PR in FISIP UB

The function of employing PR in FISIP UB for the education and social justice program is to initiate a two-way communication with the FISIP UB stakeholders. The goal of this activity is to reach a dialogue of harmony. Professional PR should do their good duties. PR of FISIP UB serves the public interest, helping in maintaining the image and stressing on good moral. To reach its organization goal, PR of FISIP UB provides advice to the organization for public needs. The PR of FISIP UB helps in spreading information. It means that the PR of FISIP UB can be an active communicator in a two-way communication.

#### 8. Steps of PR Practices

To practice the public relations effectiveness, FISIP UB maintains its media relations. According to Silver (2003, p. 25), some activities in its media relations include press releases, press conferences, press calls, media briefing, media events (luncheons, a local fair you sponsor), radio, television, newspaper, and magazine interviews, radio talk shows, development of your organization's own radio or television program, meeting with editors, placing opinion pieces in the local newspaper, letters to the editor of the local newspaper, press kit, public service announcements, in-house publications, newsletters, electronic communications, banners, websites.

Indicator that its public relations are successful: receiving feedback, clipping (for controlling the organization position), research and survey (for determining public relations strategy accordance organization goals); directing public relations; public participation (Fariani and Aryanto, 2009, p. 110).

#### 9. Characteristic of PR Practices.

Public relations in FISIP UB aim at reaching international levels. According to Ardianto (2011, p. 284), international public relations are efforts made by using planning of corporate or organization for building mutual benefit relation with public from overseas.

Everything your organization is currently doing is already being communicated to each of your intended and unintended audiences. To ensure that the right messages are being communicated and received, the organization must put into place the most powerful marketing discipline available - the corporate image management process. (Howard, 1998, p. 177).

Public relations managers are problem solvers and advisors to senior management. They are responsible for broad program result. Broom and Dozier in Baskin, Aronoff, and Lattimore, (1997, p. 64) identify three manager roles:



- Expert prescriber operates as a consultant to define the problem, suggest options, and oversee implementation.
- Problem-solver process facilitator, partners with senior management to identify problems and solve problems.
- Communication facilitator, the person on the periphery between the organization and its environment who keeps two-way communication flowing.

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

### **Conclusion:**

1. PR of FISIP UB practices education and social justice programs within and across border. They campaign and share information through website, radio, television, bulletin, brochure, poster, leaflet, and guidebook.
2. PR in FISIP UB plays a central role in strategic planning of higher education (according Higgins, 1983, p. 25, in Savio 1992, p. 2), especially in education and social justice programs.
3. To practice public relations effectiveness, FISIP UB maintains media relations.

### **Suggestion**

1. PR in FISIP UB should increase the number of education and social justice programs within and across border to accelerate internationalization.
2. To improve strategic planning in education and social justice, PR in FISIP UB can use PR effectiveness level as self-evaluation.
3. To practice PR effectiveness, FISIP UB has to perform excellent activities for all stakeholders, especially producing excellent programs in education and social justice.

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**Contact email:** maya\_diah@ub.ac.id or m.nirwana14@gmail.com.