

Crisis Communication Management of The Government Public Relations of The National Civil Service Agency in Handling Crisis on Negative News in Online Media

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Abstract. This study aims to examine the crisis communication management carried out by the BKN PR Team in handling negative reporting of the fraud crisis during the 2021 CPNS selection process on online media. The research design used is qualitative, employing a case study approach with four purposively sampled informants. The data analysis used involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and testing conclusions after going through data collection processes such as observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The study finds that the BKN PR team used nine stages to handle the crisis, namely: 1) Crisis identification and analysis, 2) Establish a crisis communications management team and appoint spokespersons, 3) Determine the strategy, communication media, and develop a timeline for an action plan, 4) Cooperate with Public Relations Consultants, and 5) Evaluation and reporting of follow-up results to BKN leaders. The findings reveal that the five steps taken by BKN Public Relations Team were able to handle the crisis effectively and maintain a positive image of the organization.

Keywords: Crisis communication management, public relations, online media, BKN.

1 Introduction

Control and management of issues and crises is a special area that must be handled by Public Relations (PR). Because when an organization or government agency is hit by a crisis, the reputation or image of that agency is at stake. What must be remembered is that managing issues should not be seen as a defensive activity. The nature of this issue management is proactive because issue management is a proactive, anticipatory and planned process designed to influence the development of an issue before it develops to a stage that requires crisis management.

Facing a crisis situation, it is Public Relations that plays a flexible role, including the role of Public Relations in managerial or technical terms. However, when faced with this crisis situation, the role of Public Relations is more managerial. Therefore, Public Relations also acts as a problem solving Process Facilitator, namely the role of a facilitator in the problem solving process. In this role Public Relations involve themselves or are involved in any (crisis)

management. He becomes a member of the team, even if possible a leader in crisis management. When this accident crisis appeared, what PR did, among others, had to be fast in providing accurate information that was useful, as well as actively communicating; regular briefing, regularly updating or updating information, monitoring media developments, and correcting inaccuracies and misinformation as soon as possible. After that, everything is resolved, then the PR is faced with making a strategy [1].

The organizational environment, both private and government agencies, is changing very rapidly today. The presence of online media in the process of disseminating information makes organizational leaders face a reality where they grow in a different environment than they currently face. The dissemination of information through online media regarding national and global social, economic, and political conditions has created an environment where openness is unavoidable if an organization wants to survive. In the Indonesian context, an organizational approach that prioritized collusion and nepotism with the government or certain parties during the New Order era was unsustainable. The fall of the New Order government had an impact on demands for openness in various fields in order to create more open competition between various organizations and government agencies.

According to Law Number 43 of 1999 which mandates that every Central/Provincial/Regency/City Agency is required to have Civil Servant Human Resources who can meet the requirements both in quantity and quality so that they can carry out government and development tasks. Civil Servants (PNS) are elements of the state Servants that have a very significant role, namely as one of the organizers of development and government to achieve national goals. Furthermore, based on the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia, this mandate was given to the National Civil Service Agency to organize the procurement of candidates for the State Civil Service Apartments.

The research entitled "Mind the Gap: Mapping Youth Skills for the Future in ASEAN" conducted by the ASEAN Foundation in collaboration with Plan International, and supported by Google.org shows that the most popular jobs in Indonesia are Civil Servant (PNS) or now known as Civil Servants (PNS). The research revealed that 1 out of 2 Indonesian youth, namely around 48%, aspires to work in the government sector. The other 35% want to become entrepreneurs, or work in the media and communications sector 29%, and in the financial sector 27%. Meanwhile, a small portion, namely around 18% chose technology, 11% education, 8% health, 4% transportation, 4% non-profit organizations, and 2% energy for their career prospects.

Quoting data from the National Civil Service Agency (BKN), the number of applicants for the 2021 CPNS selection which closed on July 26 2021 was 4,030,090, the number of applicants who registered on the BKN's SSCPNS account. A very large number and continues to increase every year. Another factor that makes civil servants the choice is because this profession is considered free from the possibility of termination of employment (PHK) and also gets pension guarantees and performance benefits. Currently, based on data from the National Civil Service Agency (BKN), as of June 30 2022 the number of Civil Servants (PNS) with active status was 3,992,766 people and the number of Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK) were 351,786 people.

Becoming a Civil Servants (PNS) must go through several stages, as stipulated in Government Regulation Number 11 of 2002 article 2 paragraph 1 that the procurement of Civil Servants is carried out starting from planning, announcement, application, screening or

selection, appointment of Prospective State Civil Servants (CPNS) to by appointment as a State Civil Servants (PNS). The CPNS recruitment process in Indonesia is indeed very vulnerable to bribery, as there is evidence of problems in the transparency of CPNS recruitment with collusion cases involving government officials.

So far, the CPNS recruitment process carried out by the government has not been seen as being able to obtain competencies according to the needs of the organization. The public considers that the recruitment process and procedures tend to be colored by spoil system practices, which still tend to promote corruption, collusion and nepotism (KKN), resulting in the low quality of civil servants. PNS quality will be largely determined by the recruitment system which is part of the activity process to search for and find PNS who have the motivation, abilities, expertise, and knowledge needed to carry out their duties [2].

Indications of irregularities almost every year occur in the acceptance of Candidates for State Civil Servants (CPNS) which involve unscrupulous government officials at both central and regional agencies, the mafia, intermediaries, regents/mayors to unscrupulous selection committee members. Corruption cases can be found in many agencies and at various levels of office. Based on a survey from katadata.co.id, registering to become a PNS ranks second in a sector with a high level of corruption with a total of 41% below when dealing with the police with a total of 44% of respondents. This proves the low level of public trust in the government's performance in the recruitment process for Candidates for State Civil Servants (CPNS).

Based on research by researchers on several online news sites from 2017 to 2021, it shows that the involvement of civil servants is still rampant in several cases of CPNS selection fraud which were held open to the public. Even on several social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Youtube you can find responses from the public regarding the case of CPNS selection fraud in 2021 which was very large, this was also reinforced by the appearance of the hashtag #BKNSarangMaling which was driven by an anonymous account which became the first trending topic on social media Twitter and received attention from the public and became one of the factors that caused the crisis at the State Civil Service Agency as the organizing committee for the 2021 CPNS acceptance selection. This crisis situation certainly had an impact on public trust in the BKN as the organizer of the 2021 CPNS selection.

The beginning of the crisis situation experienced by the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) as the team organizing the 2021 CPNS selection occurred when a case of alleged fraudulent CPNS selection in Buol, Central Sulawesi, with the remote access mode spread on online media and became a public spotlight, causing Commission II of The House of Representatives of The Republic Of Indonesia (DPR) requesting investigations and audits to be carried out in all regions in Indonesia. This issue was exacerbated by the emergence of an anonymous account @txtdaridgmbk on social media Twitter which, through its account, spread information regarding the 2021 CPNS selection fraud and named a number of PNS officials at the BKN who were involved in the case. In addition, this anonymous account has begun to lead to public opinion which aims to change the policy direction of the National Selection Committee (PANSELNAS) regarding the implementation of the 2021 CPNS selection.

Apart from receiving attention from Commission II DPR RI, the Minister of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform of the Republic of Indonesia, Tjahjo Kumolo also stated that he would dishonorably dismiss civil servants who were proven to be involved in the 2021 CPNS selection fraud case, both those in regional or central agencies as well as those in Ministry of PANRB and BKN. Therefore, to restore public trust, the Ministry

of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform and the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) and Indonesian police formed the Anti-Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism Task Force for CPNS in 2021 to conduct a thorough investigation to find out who was involved in this case.

Public trust is a major source of strength for any organization. So that the organization can exist and develop. In addition, public trust is an internal and external force that determines the life and death of the organization. Society demands everything completely transparent. Public Relations of the State Civil Service Agency (BKN) regrets that there are attempts to indicate fraud in the 2021 CPNS selection in several regions in Indonesia. Following up on this, the Head of the BKN Legal Public Relations and Cooperation Bureau, Satya Pratama said that BKN collaborated with the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT) and the National Cyber and Crypto Agency (BSSN), and was fully supported by the National Selection Committee (PANSELNAS) for CPNS selection. 2021 to conduct an investigation into these allegations [3].

The dominance of negative reporting has the opportunity to cause a crisis in organizations or government agencies such as the BKN, so it is felt that it is necessary to handle the crisis with the right communication strategy by the BKN Public Relations to anticipate this. Public Relations Crisis is an event, rumor, or information that has a bad influence on the company's reputation, image, and credibility. This involvement can affect the existence of the BKN and has the opportunity to damage the image of the institution thereby affecting public trust in the BKN itself.

Based on this background, this research aims to describe Crisis Communication Management of The Government Public Relations of The National Civil Service Agency in Handling Crises on Negative News in Online Media.

2 Research Methods

The approach of this research is descriptive qualitative because in this study it produces conclusions in the form of data that describes in detail, not data in the form of numbers. In writing this research, the researcher uses a case study type with a single case study model. The case study in this research is the handling of the crisis by Public Relations team of the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) against the Recruitment of Prospective Civil Servants (CPNS) selection fraud in 2021.

The data collection technique in this study was carried out by direct interviews (in-depth interviews) with a purposive sampling technique to 4 informants from the BKN Public Relations, Legal and Cooperation Bureau. This interview aims to dig up in-depth information about topics related to this problem so that the information needed by the researcher is collected. Data collection techniques in this research used interviews, observation and documentation. Furthermore, the analytical technique used in this research is an interactive analysis technique belonging to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana [4]. This analysis basically consists of four components, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and testing conclusions.

3 Results and Discussions

A crisis is an unexpected event that can unexpectedly attack an organization, institution or government agency. Robert P. Powell in his book *Crisis-A Leadership Opportunity* [5], states that a crisis is an unexpected event, has a dramatic impact, sometimes has never happened before, which pushes the organization into chaos and can destroy the organization.

Entering the digital era where all information spreads very widely and can be obtained quickly through internet-based online media has an impact on the scope of government agencies where crises become more vulnerable to occur with a bigger impact than before. As stated by Coombs [6] The development of information technology and the internet makes companies more vulnerable to crises with a bigger impact than before. This statement is also supported by González-Herrero & Smith [7] which shows that the Internet is not only a new media in crises, but also can be a new trigger for crises.

The National Civil Service Agency (BKN) is one of the government agencies that has been hit by a crisis through negative reports about fraud in the 2021 State Civil Apparatus Candidate (CASN) selection in online media. The initial response from BKN in handling this crisis was late, but the role of BKN public relations in handling this crisis was very crucial where BKN public relations carried out the role of public relations as advisors managing information, communication facilitators, problem solving processes and becoming communication technicians. When a crisis occurs, BKN public relations always provide input to the leadership of BKN in terms of crisis handling and communication strategies used. In addition, BKN public relations is also active and prioritizes positive campaigns in handling crises that occur at BKN.

Furthermore, in handling crises that occur at BKN the role of crisis communication management is one that must be carried out. With good crisis communication management, it helps BKN in handling crises that occur. Kasali [8] said that a crisis is a turning point for better or worse, a turning point for better or worse. It can also be said that the crisis is a crucial condition or decisive moment. Therefore, BKN public relations in handling this crisis must carry out the stages of crisis communication management appropriately.

The steps from handling and managing crises in government agencies, is an important part of the government's PR function. In handling this crisis, BKN took several steps in crisis management, namely:

1. Crisis identification and analysis

The first step in managing crisis management carried out by BKN is to identify and analyze the crisis. Identifying a crisis is the first step to find out the problems and factors that cause a crisis to occur. Where the purpose of this crisis identification is to determine steps to overcome the crisis that occurred.

In identifying crises, BKN public relations proactively coordinates internal and external parties to obtain facts related to this crisis.

After identifying the crisis, the next step is conducting a crisis analysis. The purpose of conducting this analysis is to find out the causes of the crisis in depth, why the crisis happened, and to what extent the crisis has had an impact on BKN. By getting the results of the analysis of the facts obtained from a comprehensive crisis identification, BKN public relations can formulate strategic steps in overcoming the crisis that occurred.

2. Establish a crisis communications management team and appoint spokespersons

To speed up the process of handling crises that occurred at BKN, the next step taken by BKN public relations was to form a crisis management team consisting of BKN employees from various deputies, fields, with diverse expertise. The existence of this team is useful for accelerating information and coordination between parties so that crisis management can be carried out quickly, precisely and efficiently. The crisis communication team is the team responsible for crisis management.

BKN then appointed a spokesperson in handling this crisis. This is based on the many circulating confusion which actually exacerbated the crisis situation that occurred. The BKN's considerations in choosing a spokesperson referred to two criteria, namely being a high-ranking official at the BKN and being in charge of areas related to selection fraud.

3. Determine the strategy, communication media, and develop a timeline for an action plan

Strategy in handling crises is an important factor that determines the success of BKN in dealing with crises that occur. The strategy undertaken by BKN in dealing with this crisis aims to: build favorable public opinion, gain a positive image in society, and prioritize and serve the public's right to obtain information.

Furthermore, in dealing with this selection fraud crisis, the strategy undertaken by BKN is to provide dissemination to the public as to what the BKN's commitment is in dealing with selection fraud that occurs and carry out positive campaigns related to BKN's actions in solving fraud problems that occur.

In carrying out its communication strategy, BKN uses all of its communication media and looks at the level of efficiency of the media in disseminating information. Furthermore, to ensure that the crisis management program is running according to plan, the BKN crisis management team makes a timeline of action plans containing the steps, what resources are needed, to the completion timetable, very useful for the BKN crisis communication management team in crisis management. So that the crisis that occurs can be resolved quickly, effectively and efficiently.

4. Cooperate with Public Relations Consultants

The decision to cooperate with this public relations consultant was taken by BKN because the main source of the crisis that occurred came from social media so that the performance of BKN's social media was needed to carry out positive campaigns and get public attention.

The performance of BKN's social media in handling this crisis is felt to be not optimal, so by collaborating with Public Relations consultants, especially in terms of managing social media, it can optimize the performance of BKN's social media in spreading positive campaigns carried out by BKN in dealing with the CASN fraud crisis in 2021 that happened.

5. Evaluation and reporting of follow-up results to BKN leaders

The final step of crisis management carried out by BKN is to evaluate and provide reports regarding the results of follow-up crisis handling carried out by the BKN crisis communication management implementation team to BKN leadership on a regular basis. The purpose of this evaluation is to find out how effective the crisis management has been.

At this stage, BKN also made improvements in terms of the CASN selection process policy, where in this new policy there are several additional procedures to minimize the possibility of selection fraud occurring again.

The success of BKN in dealing with this crisis can be seen from the crisis management steps taken by BKN in handling the crisis that occurred. There are several similarities and differences with the crisis management steps described by Kasali [8]. The difference can be seen from BKN's steps, namely crisis isolation, forming a crisis communication management team and conducting an evaluation at the final stage. For the case of BKN crisis handling, which was the first crisis that occurred at BKN, with the formation of a crisis management team, it facilitated BKN's work in handling the crisis.

Crisis isolation is one step that was not taken by BKN in handling this crisis. This is because the crisis has spread widely through online media. Therefore, the focus of crisis management carried out by BKN is to take steps to prevent crises more effectively and efficiently.

The next stage is evaluation. By evaluating the steps for crisis management, BKN can determine the effectiveness of crisis management. This is in line with the crisis handling steps taken by Ivy Lee, a public relations expert from New York in 1906 [9] wherein the final stage of the crisis handling step is monitoring and evaluating problems that have been achieved or those that have not been resolved in an effort to reduce the impact and crisis effects.

4 Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the crisis that occurred at BKN was a crisis that occurred without any signs or symptoms. In handling this crisis, the role of government public relations is needed. the role of government public relations in carrying out crisis communication management is also very important to resolve this crisis quickly and accurately. To overcome the crisis the BKN public relations team carried out nine communication crisis management activities, including 1) Crisis identification and analysis, 2) Establish a crisis communications management team and appoint spokespersons, 3) Determine the strategy, communication media, and develop a timeline for an action plan, 4) Cooperate with Public Relations Consultants, and 5) Evaluation and reporting of follow-up results to BKN leaders.

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