



The Influence of Communication Competencies and Professionalism Public Relations Officers towards the Quality of Public Relation Services in the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia Representative of the North Sumatera Province

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of communication competence and PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services at the Republic of Indonesia Supreme Audit Board (BPK RI) of North Sumatra. The research method used is the correlational method. The study population is the inspectorate employees in North Sumatra Province. The research sample consisted of 1 inspectorate employee of North Sumatra Province, 2 employees of BUMD, and 33 municipal / city government officials in the entire province of North Sumatra. Data collection techniques used a questionnaire. The theory used in this research is the theory of communication competency by Slocum and Hellriegel, the public relation officers (PRO) professionalism theory by Richard Hall and the excellent service by Atep Adya Barata. The results showed that there was an influence between communication competence on the quality of public relations services at the BPK RI Representative of the Province of North Sumatra. There is also an influence between PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services at the BPK RI Representative of North Sumatra Province. Then there is the effect of communication competence and PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services in the BPK RI Representative of North Sumatra Province, where the F-count value is greater than the F-table at a significance level of 0.05 confidence, so that the communication competence combined with PRO professionalism can improve the quality of public relations services at BPK RI Representatives of North Sumatra Province.

Keywords: *Communication Competence; Professionalism; Public Relations Officers; Service Quality; Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia in Sumatera Utara Province*

Introduction

Interpersonal communication has an effect that can be felt directly, such as affecting other people or individuals. Things like this can usually happen because communication is carried out by meeting in person, and in conveying the message, it does not use the media. Thus, communicators and communicants can connect directly and without distance (face to face) (Cangara, 2010: 33).

Effective interpersonal communication, serves to create and maintaining good relations between each individual involved in communication, conveying the intent and purpose of the message giver to the recipient of the message, can influence attitudes and behavior, create a better self-image and be able to help solve interpersonal relationship problems. Sentoso (2007: 103) states that the law of effective communication includes openness, empathy, a supportive attitude, a positive attitude and equality. The five laws above are positive elements of supporting interpersonal communication. Meanwhile, the effectiveness of interpersonal communication can be viewed from the side of the messenger (communicator), the recipient of the message (communicant) and the message conveyed.

The communication process within the organization is one of the determining factors in achieving the goals of an organization. If these things can be well intertwined, a common understanding will be formed between individuals, so that they can establish good cooperation. Cutlip and Center (Sujanto, 2019: 94) said that public relations is an effort that is carried out on purpose, and is planned on an ongoing basis to create good relationships between organizations or government agencies and the internal and external communities it serves. The main purpose of public relations is to influence the attitudes and behavior of a person or group when communicating with each other, such as when carrying out a dialogue or discussion with all groups, where the success of the organization can be judged from the perceptions, attitudes and opinions of the people it serves.

Public relations officers (PRO) must be able to work professionally, they must also have credibility and be able to establish good relationships with journalists and media, so that good relations with the media and the public can be maintained. (Nurjaman et al in Sujanto, 2019: 93). Their role and position are very strategic and determine in order to create a positive image of the community. The professionalism of a public relations officer greatly affects the level of media satisfaction with the services they receive, especially regarding the information they need. To improve the ability of public relations officers, they must have mastery of communication and information technology, including proficient in social media and understand the needs of the community. More importantly, public relations must maintain good and close relations with journalists, so that the information conveyed to the public can be controlled for the good of the organization.

The PRO role of government institutions in communicating programs and institutional performance to the public is very important. In addition, PRO as a source of information, must be able or competent in overcoming challenges and able to adapt to changes in the environment very quickly. This change was felt very quickly, especially the development of technology, information and communication. The PRO of government institutions must also continue to improve the quality of services and information management and be able to encourage active community participation in the success of various government programs whose results can be enjoyed by the public. The service task performed by the government institution PRO is an important task because it is closely related to other fields. When the service component experiences problems, the impact of congestion will occur in all sectors, therefore good planning is required. It is also necessary to establish a standard of service to the community that is tailored to the needs of today's institutions.

The public relations function carried out by the PRO is generally an effort to build and maintain better communication and can provide benefits between institutions or agencies to the community. Public relations can help achieve organizational goals (Sujanto, 2019: 93). Public relations are able to influence

the success or failure of communicating in an agency. Institutional communication to the public is generally carried out by public relations in each agency or company, either directly or through the media. The general role of public relations management of a government agency can be seen from the public relations activities carried out, for example evaluating the attitudes and opinions of the people being served. So that means that public relations must be able to correct the lack of services and must be able to see the situation and conditions of the community to further adjust themselves in carrying out their duties in the midst of society. Public relations in a government agency is certainly needed in managing information held by the agency to introduce its essence to the public. Public relations also provide useful information and also to safeguard the agency's good name.

The public relations function is very important in an organization, both government and private, every organization is obliged to have a public relations division which represents the organization in the eyes of the public. Public relations action becomes a picture of an organization. Likewise, the Supreme Audit Agency of the Republic of Indonesia (BPK RI), public relations is the spearhead of the delivery of information from institutions to the public.

These agencies, both head office and representative offices, have a public relations division in charge of communication activities, both internal and external communications in order to build an institutional image or long-term image development. If a government agency wants to get a good response from the public, then they must have a public relation that is able to enhance the image of the agency. The attitude and personality of public relations in an institution reflect how that image is in the eyes of the public.

Public Relations at the Supreme Audit Agency of the Republic of Indonesia is a work unit whose duties are to convey messages or information about institutions and agency products that need to be published in cooperation with the media or the press as well as direct messages to the public through field actions and online media. This public relations activity aims to create publicity and a positive image from the public towards the institution.

Public relations at the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province are managed by a PRO whose educational background is not communication, but from accounting, economics, and law. Even though their educational background is not from communication science, PROs are required to be able to do their job well so that the services provided to the community are considered good. One of the tasks and functions of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province PRO is to serve requests for information in accordance with applicable regulations.

Public Relations of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province is a bridge between the community and institutions. Through public relations, the public can participate in realizing good governance, where the public can submit all complaints related to fraudulent management of state finances to be examined by the BPK auditors. The BPK will inform the public about the results of the examination. BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province through public relations routinely conducts follow-up monitoring activities of BPK audit results by inviting all regional / city governments (Pemda / Pemko), North Sumatra Provincial Government, PT. Bank of North Sumatra, and PDAM Tirtanadi.

The follow-up monitoring activities of the BPK audit results are required to be attended by the inspectorate of all regional governments / municipalities and the inspectorate of the province of North Sumatra. This is because the inspectorate is a supervisor in the regional government. This is stated in the North Sumatra Pergub No. 46 of 2007. The regulation regulates the main tasks and functions and work procedures of the Regional Inspectorate of North Sumatra Province. One of the functions of the inspectorate is to supervise internal performance and finance through inspections, review and evaluation activities and other activities. Therefore, any public relations activity of the BPK Representative of North

Sumatra Province related to the inspection always involves the inspectorate of the local government / municipal government and the Province of North Sumatra.

Inspectorates located in every region throughout North Sumatra represent the whole community in overseeing regional financial management. This is because the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province is obliged to submit a follow-up monitoring report on the recommendation of the inspection results to the inspectorate. The report is the result of an examination related to the realization of the regional government in implementing recommendations on the results of the examination or a report regarding the return of regional losses that is deposited in the regional treasury. Through this report, the public, through the inspectorate, can find out whether the local government has carried out its obligations in recovering regional losses in accordance with the findings of the BPK examination.

The routine activities above are carried out entirely by the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province by involving the head of the representative and the head of the sub-audit as resource persons. PRO is required to be able to provide quality services, both to internal and external parties. The measure of the quality of government agency services received by the community can be seen from the suitability of these services with the wishes of the community or the public. Whether or not the services provided by the PRO can be assessed based on the level of community satisfaction. Furthermore, if the service provided by PRO exceeds the expectations of the community, then the service is declared of quality and very ideal. On the other hand, if the services provided by the government agencies PRO are below the expectations of the community, it means that the services of government agencies are considered poor.

The quality of services provided by an agency can be improved by improving the quality of its people. PRO communication competence and all service providers are one of the main supporting factors. Even though people communicate all the time, only a few people know about the level of quality of communication, both individually, socially, and professionally. Another factor that may affect the quality of public relations services is PRO professionalism. PRO professionalism is indispensable in organizations or government agencies. The results of PRO work can be assessed from various angles according to the portion, the object of work, activities that are continuous and the completion of work is carried out in a relatively short time.

The desire of the community as recipients of services is obtained treatment without discrimination. This form of service can be carried out with the readiness of government agencies that are able to position themselves and follow changes that occur in society. The government bureaucracy has the responsibility and obligation to provide excellent service to the community. The service is based on PRO's professionalism and human values as well as PRO's ability to adapt to the needs of the community as service recipients as well as changes that occur in the community.

Given the very importance of the existence of human resources (HR), every employee should be able to professionally carry out their work and responsibilities. Even though in reality it is a difficult thing to do. The services provided to the community are often not in accordance with what they should be, where there are still many government officials who do not work professionally so that the services provided to the community are less than optimal. An example is when a state civil servant (ASN) is unable to fulfill its obligations according to predetermined working hours. As quoted in the news released by Kompas.Com on Monday, 16 October 2019 at 07:45 WIB. This news is one of the many news related to raids that have caught a number of ASN wandering around in malls / supermarkets or outside the office during working hours. Things like this will result in the service received by the community is no longer optimal because when the community needs service, ASN who should serve them is not there. (<https://regional.kompas.com/read/2019/10/16/07450731/nekad-keluyuran-saat-jam-kerja-14-asn-kenarazia?page=all>).

Other factors that cause less optimal service to the community based on the observations of researchers are inadequate PRO communication competence and lack of public relations professionalism in carrying out their duties. Likewise, with the PRO at BPK RI, as an agency that has a strategic position in society, they are required to be able to provide good services to the public. Thus, the community can participate in realizing BPK RI that is good governance by overseeing the management of state financial responsibility. However, in practice, there are still people who feel disappointed with the BPK public relations services they receive. As quoted from the news on hariansib.com regarding the complaint by SIB journalists against the BPK RI at the Tanjungbalai Police which was released on Saturday, 11 May 2019 at 09:45 WIB. Journalists feel that they are being treated unfairly, causing conflict between journalists and the BPK agency itself. Things like this can disrupt the stability of the implementation of BPK duties and raise public doubts about the competence and professionalism of the BPK PRO. (Source: <https://hariansib.com/Headlies/Terkait-Peng-Complaints-W-Journalist-SIB-Terhadap-BPK-RI-Sumut-di-Polres-Tanjungbalai>). Another case that has troubled the public is the case of the procurement of the Sumber Waras Hospital in Jakarta. One of the news was released in [TEMPO.CO](https://tempo.co) on Wednesday, July 8 2015 at 22:08 WIB. In the news, it was written that the conflict between Ahok and BPK related to the purchase of Sumber Waras Hospital land was the finding of the BPK investigation. In the news, the Head of the Public Relations Bureau of BPK RI explained that the purchase of the land was declared problematic due to 5 factors. In this case, public relations as a bridge between BPK and the community must have an understanding and the ability to explain the problem that is happening so that the public can know the true condition. Public relations is responsible for maintaining the good name of the agency so that its credibility is not doubted by the people it serves. (Source: <https://metro.tempo.co/read/682334/ahok-vs-bpk-5-alasan-lahan-sumber-waras-dianggap-beralalah>).

Other news related to the Sumber Waras land case was released in [Bisnis.Com](https://bisnis.com) on Tuesday, 21 March 2017 at 20:31 WIB. In the news, the Head of the Public Relations Bureau of the BPK RI confirmed that the BPK had carried out an audit process of the purchase of Sane Sumber's land by following independent production, guidelines and all applicable provisions, where the audit process could not be intervened by any party. The Public Relations Bureau emphasized that this was to answer public doubts about the professionalism and independence of the Indonesian BPK regarding the implementation of the audit. (Source: <https://ekonomi.bisnis.com/read/20170321/9/639080/bpk-bantah-tak-mandiri>). Public relations are required not only to be competent in the field related to public relations but also to know about the institutions that oversee it. PRO's understanding of this will make it easier for them to maintain the good name of their institution.

The cases that occur in some of the news above can be avoided by effective communication between BPK RI agencies through PRO and the community. With effective communication, there will be a good cooperative relationship between the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province and the community, especially in overseeing regional finances in all city / district governments throughout North Sumatra. This communication can be well established if the PRO has adequate and professional competence in carrying out their duties. On the basis of what has been stated on the above background, researchers are interested in examining the effect of communication competence and professionalism of public relations officers on the quality of public relations services in the Representative Council of North Sumatra Province.

Conceptual Framework

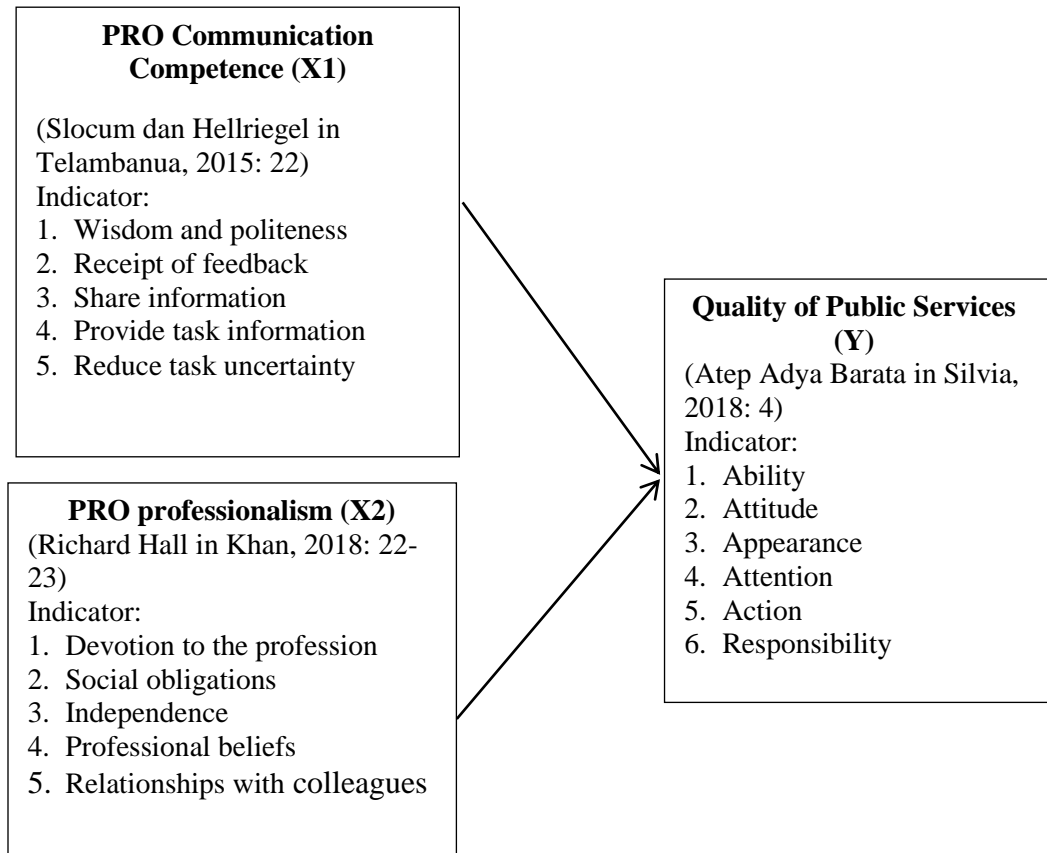


Figure 1. Concept Framework

Hypothesis

The alternative hypothesis in this study is:

- H1 : There is an influence of communication competence on the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province
- H2 : There is an effect of PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province
- H3 : There is a significant influence between communication competence and PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province.

Research Methods

The research method used in this research is correlational. The approach used by researchers is a quantitative approach.

In this study, the location that the researchers determined was the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province which is located at Jalan Imam Bonjol number 22 Medan. This research is correlational using a quantitative approach, which is a method that emphasizes the numbers taken from

questionnaires distributed to respondents. The total population is 36, consisting of 1 provincial government, 33 regional governments / municipalities, and 2 BUMDs.

This study uses total sampling in which the number of samples is the same as the total population of 36 samples, consisting of 1 provincial government, 33 regional governments / municipalities, and 2 BUMDs. The data collection technique in this research was carried out using a questionnaire.

Based on a circular from the Secretary General of the BPK and the Chancellor of USU, the researchers distributed questionnaires to respondents through an e-form facility in the form of a Google form.

The questionnaire assessment given to respondents refers to a Likert scale. This scale contains 1-3 with answer choices including Agree, Disagree, and Disagree. The test was carried out by using the validity test and reliability test with the SPSS version 25 computer program. Data analysis techniques used multiple regression analysis, multiple correlation, and hypothesis testing.

Research Result

Statistic analysis

Normality test

Table 1. Results of the Data Normality Test

| One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test | | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | | Communication_ Competence | Professionalism | Quality of Service |
| N | | 36 | 36 | 36 |
| Normal Parameters ^{a,b} | Mean | 32,53 | 32,33 | 35,11 |
| | Std. Deviation | 1,082 | 1,146 | 2,240 |
| Most Extreme Differences | Absolute | 0,447 | 0,442 | 0,376 |
| | Positive | 0,331 | 0,280 | 0,346 |
| | Negative | -0,447 | -0,442 | -0,376 |
| Test Statistic | | 0,447 | 0,442 | 0,376 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,000 ^c | ,000 ^c | ,000 ^c |
| a. Test distribution is Normal. | | | | |
| b. Calculated from data. | | | | |
| c. Lilliefors Significance Correction. | | | | |

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Based on the results obtained in the table above, it can be concluded that the data value for the communication competency variable (X1), the professionalism variable (X2) and the service quality variable (Y) respectively is 0.000 which means that the data is not normally distributed ($0.000 < 0,05$).

Multiple linear regression analysis

Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | -26,977 | 6,694 | | -4,030 | 0,000 |
| | Communication_competency | 1,294 | 0,234 | 0,625 | 5,522 | 0,000 |
| | Professionalism | 0,619 | 0,221 | 0,317 | 2,798 | 0,009 |

a. Dependent Variable: Service_Quality

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Multiple correlation analysis

Table 3. Multiple Correlation Analysis

| | | | Communication _ Competence | Professionalism | Quality of Service |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Spearman's rho | Communication _ Competence | Correlation Coefficient | 1,000 | ,510** | ,503** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0,001 | 0,002 |
| | | N | 36 | 36 | 36 |
| | Professionalism | Correlation Coefficient | ,510** | 1,000 | ,802** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,001 | | 0,000 |
| | | N | 36 | 36 | 36 |
| | | Correlation Coefficient | ,503** | ,802** | 1,000 |
| | Quality of Service | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,002 | 0,000 | |
| | | N | 36 | 36 | 36 |

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Based on this value, it can be concluded that the correlation of the two variables is significant because the significance value that provides it is less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$).

Hypothesis testing

Tabel 4. Result of T-Test

| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------|---------------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | -26,977 | 6,694 | | -4,030 | 0,000 |
| | Communication_ Competence (X ₁) | 1,294 | 0,234 | 0,625 | 5,522 | 0,000 |
| | Professionalism (X ₂) | 0,619 | 0,221 | 0,317 | 2,798 | 0,009 |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Service (Y)

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Concurrent test (F-Test)

Table 5. Simultaneous Testing X1, X2 Against Y

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|---------|-------------|--------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | |
| 1 | Regression | 127,280 | 2 | 63,640 | 43,502 | ,000 ^b |
| | Residual | 48,276 | 33 | 1,463 | | |
| | Total | 175,556 | 35 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Service
b. Predictors: (Constant), Professionalism, Communication_ Competence

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Discussion

The Effect of Communication Competence on the Quality of Public Relations Services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province

The results of this study prove that there is an influence of communication competence on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. Thus the first alternative hypothesis (H1) proposed in this study can be accepted. The results of this study are in line with the theory put forward by Slocum and Hellriegel regarding indicators of communication competence so that the theory used as a reference in the study is stated to be defensible.

The correlation coefficient of the communication competency variable (X1) on service quality (Y) can be seen in table 6 below:

Table 6. Correlation Coefficient of Variable X1 to Y

| Variable | N | T _{count} | t _{table} |
|--|----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Communication Competence (X1) on Service Quality (Y) | 36 | 5,522 | 2.034 |

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Based on the table above, the researchers found that the variable communication competence has a significant effect in improving the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province. Communication competence has an influence on the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province as evidenced by the variable t-count value in the form of communication competence is greater than the t-table value at the 95% confidence level. By using the two-way test, the t table used is t 2.5% or t 0.025, degrees of freedom (df) = N-k = 36-3 = 33 where N = the number of samples, and k = the total number of variables is 2.034. Thus tcount > ttable (5,522 > 2,034) and a significance value of 0,000 (sig < 0.05). Communication competence is an independent variable and service quality is the dependent variable in this study.

According to Slocum and Hellriegel (Telaumbanua, 2015: 22) the indicators used to measure the level of communication competence in organizations are:

- 1) Wisdom and politeness; everyday attitudes in the form of our behavior, ways of speaking, dexterity;
- 2) Receiving feedback; communicating to someone or a group about how people's behavior has affected us or others;
- 3) Share information; instructions conveyed by the leadership to subordinates regarding various information needed by the community and the instructions are communicated to the community in accordance with the instructions
- 4) Provide task information; instructions given by the leadership of the organization to their subordinates regarding the tasks and work to be done. The instructions given relate to the speed and accuracy of the service as well as the ease and justice in serving the community;
- 5) Reduce task uncertainty; task uncertainty is an individual's inability to predict something accurately so that he experiences structural ambiguity in his tasks.

Based on the five indicators stated above, the researchers made two questions for each indicator. The answers given by the respondents indicated that they as the community served by the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province assessed that the BPK PRO had fulfilled the five indicators of communication competence. Thus the community as an object of service feels that the information services it receives are satisfactory because the public relations serving have competence in carrying out their duties.

In accordance with the theory used by researchers as the basis for this study that the first indicator of communication competence is wisdom and politeness, which are daily attitudes in the form of behavior, speech mode and skill. In accordance with the research findings, the first indicator in communication competence is in line with the daily attitudes of the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province. They serve the information needs of the community well and with a polite and polite attitude. Through open questions, respondents also stated that the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province had sufficient competence in accordance with their main duties and functions.

The second indicator in theory that researchers use as a reference for research is communication competence which is characterized by receiving feedback. This theory explains that a competent public relations officer must be able to provide feedback to the public. The results of the study show that the PRO at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province has provided feedback according to the expectations of the community. For example, when the public submits a complaint to the BPK through public relations, the public relation immediately follows up on the complaint report by forwarding the information to the head of the representative. Furthermore, the head of representative will instruct the follow-up on the complaint report, such as scheduling a follow-up examination, and submitting the complaint report to the investigating team on duty in the field. This kind of thing creates satisfaction for the community so that they will not hesitate to make reports or complaints in the future.

The third indicator of communication competence in accordance with the theory is information sharing, where public relations officers are required to convey information needed by the public in accordance with their superiors' instructions. This is in line with the respondents' answers to the research questionnaire, that the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province have provided information according to the needs of the community, as well as information regarding the submission of reports on the results of examinations and monitoring activities follow-up on recommendations of the results of the examination to the inspectorate representing the community.

Providing task information is the fourth indicator of communication competency variables. Based on this theory, reducing task uncertainty is that the tasks performed by public relations must be carried out with speed, accuracy, ease and justice in serving the community. Thus, public relations must have the competence to be able to provide excellent service to the community. The results showed that the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of the Province of North Sumatra had provided accurate and fast information to the community. However, there is certain information that cannot be immediately fulfilled because there is information that is confidential in nature so that a special procedure is required to convey this information to the public.

The fifth indicator in communication competence based on the theory used by researchers is to reduce task uncertainty. This is closely related to the fourth indicator above, where when a PR officer or PRO does not understand their duties, they are obliged to consult with their superiors. Especially when the public submits requests for sensitive or non-open information freely, the public relations officers of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province are required to ask for directions from the head of the representative. When something like this happens, the public relations officer must have communication competence to be able to convey matters related to the bureaucratic procedure to the public, so that there are no misunderstandings.

Communication competence is not only for scientific purposes, but also for practical applications, because this communication competence is very useful to be applied in daily activities. The quality of communication competence is needed not only in social interactions at the interpersonal level, but also at the organizational and community levels, so that good relations are established between the community and government organizations. People who are less competent in communicating can cause various problems, both personal and social in society. These problems can involve interpersonal relationships that affect professionalism and success in academics, and can even cause psychological problems and health problems. Social life in society will increase along with the increase in good and effective communication skills.

Quality and professional public services will provide comfort for both parties. Quality service can be seen from the direct evidence in the form of aspects that can be seen and reached, the ability to provide the promised service immediately and accurately. Other aspects are responsibility or providing responsive services, as well as guarantees in the form of information service competence, polite attitude, trustworthiness and a sense of empathy in establishing communication relationships between the public

and information service providers. Furthermore, prioritizing the achievement of goals and objectives in communicating, by providing information services that are fast and easy, precise, and straightforward and can be felt directly by service recipients at the same time.

Information service activities to the public need to be continuously improved with various innovations so that these services can satisfy the community. This also does not mean that the ultimate goal of a given service has been achieved, but it is necessary to continue to make improvements in accordance with the increasing needs of the community. The excellent service provided by the information service provider will be able to increase cooperation between the community and government organizations. Thus, the quality of service can be said to be good or bad depending on the ability of government organizations to provide services in accordance with community expectations.

The communication competence of PR officers or PROs is needed to meet the community's need for quality services. This is because we realize it or not, humans always communicate in their daily lives, either communicating with themselves or with other people. Even though communication is something that is continuously done, mistakes often occur that are not realized. For this reason, a communication that is able to build cooperation between one person and another is needed, by communicating effectively so that individuals will understand each other, mutual tolerance, complement each other and give each other. In this case the communication competence used is interpersonal communication competence.

A PRO or public relations officer will be able to provide excellent service to the community if they are able to hear well, provide good feedback and have competences like the theory described above. The community will feel comfortable coming to the BPK Representative Office for North Sumatra Province if they feel they are being treated well. If the PRO provides excellent service, the community will be a good work partner for BPK.

Cooperation between the community and the Republic of Indonesia BPK should not be underestimated, because society also has a very important role in realizing good governance. The community becomes the supervisor of the government system which is practiced on a daily basis, especially by the local government. Likewise, BPK's relationship with the community, when there is fraud in the field, the community becomes an extension of the ears of the BPK agency. So that when there is effective communication between PR officers or PROs with the community, any fraud that occurs in the field can be handled properly.

The Effect of Professionalism on the Quality of Public Relations Services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province

This study shows the results that there can be influence of professionalism of public relations officers on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. Thus, the second alternative hypothesis (H2) proposed in this study can be accepted. This is in line with the theory of professionalism put forward by Richard Hall which the researcher uses as the basis for conducting this research, so that the theory is declared to be defensible.

Professionalism is a variable that affects service quality, it can be said that the presence of PRO professionalism will result in an increase in the value of service quality, and vice versa. To determine the effect of professionalism on service quality, a questionnaire was distributed to the public. The calculation results show that there is an effect of PRO professionalism in improving the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province.

The correlation coefficient of the PRO professionalism variable on service quality can be seen in the table below:

Table 7. Correlation Coefficient of Variable X2 against Y

| Variable | N | t _{count} | t _{table} |
|---|----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Professionalism PRO (X2) on Service Quality (Y) | 36 | 2,798 | 2,034 |

Source: Data Processing Results with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the variable PRO professionalism has a significant effect in improving the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province. This effect can be proven by obtaining a value of 2.798 while t table is 2.034, thus t is greater than t table ($2.798 > 2.034$) and a significance value of 0.009 ($\text{sig} < 0.05$). Professionalism is an independent variable and service quality is the dependent variable in this study.

According to Richard Hall (Khan, 2018: 22-23) there are five indicators of professionalism, namely: (1) dedication to the profession; (2) social obligations; (3) self-reliance; (4) belief in the regulation of the profession and (5) relationship with colleagues. The first indicator, namely dedication to the profession, is reflected by professionals who are dedicated to their duties and responsibilities, by using the knowledge and skills they have to carry out their profession. Patience and loyalty in carrying out work even if extrinsic rewards are not appropriate. This attitude reflects complete dedication to the profession / work. Loyalty in carrying out duties and responsibilities even though the compensation received is relatively insufficient. This attitude reflects a complete dedication to the profession / job. One of the commitments of the professional apparatus is to work in full totality, so that for them, the main reward or compensation is spiritual satisfaction, while material is the next compensation.

The results showed that the public relations of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province had carried out their duties professionally. The researchers' observations also prove that these public relations officers work without getting extrinsic rewards according to their job, because they work from morning to night and often have to work to the office on Saturdays and Sundays with no extrinsic reward. This indicates that the public relations officers of the BPK RI Representative of North Sumatra Province have met one indicator of professionalism.

The second indicator in PRO professionalism is social obligation, which is the view of the importance of a profession's role and the benefits that the community receives from the profession. Based on the research results, this indicator has also been fulfilled by the public relations officers of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province, where they realize the need for their presence in the midst of society so that they want to provide information services as well as possible.

Independence is the third indicator of PRO professionalism. A public relations officer must have the ability and strength of a professional in carrying out his duties and be able to make decisions without any influence or intervention from other parties. A professional independence is considered hampered if there is interference from outside parties. The results showed that the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of the Province of North Sumatra had carried out their profession independently by following the applicable procedures. Various tasks can be completed without interference from other parties, except for mediation between the community and the BPK examining team. Public relations acts as a mediator to facilitate the meeting, such as determining the meeting place and time.

Confidence in the regulation of the profession and relationships with colleagues are the fourth and fifth indicators of PRO professionalism. Based on the research results, these two indicators have also been fulfilled by the public relations officers of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province. They do their job or profession by working together because basically they have the same competence.

Likewise, when holding an event, such as a meeting with the inspectorates of the entire North Sumatra Province, they can take on their respective roles so that the event can run well.

Professional public relations officers will demonstrate their abilities and expertise, attitude and discipline, interest and enthusiasm for work. Therefore, public relations are required to have the ability 'professionally' in carrying out their duties, so that the quality of services provided to the community can be satisfactory. In turn, PROs must be able to develop themselves optimally, especially in fields that are directly related to improving service quality.

Sujanto (2019: 200) states that the professionalism of a public relations officer cannot be separated from a code of ethics in public relations. The code of conduct is a system that assesses something as true and untrue, fair and unfair, honest and dishonest. As a form of social responsibility, a public relations profession must fulfill the expectations and moral obligations of the society it serves. The professionalism of a PRO will emerge if he or she has a strong professional ethics awareness in providing services to the community.

Public relations administrative services are one form of public services provided by the government to the community. In assessing the quality of services provided, the role of the community as service recipients must be considered. The community as the party who feels directly the services provided, has an important role in providing an assessment of the quality of service. The community has an important role because they are the parties who feel the services provided directly, thus, they play an important role in evaluating the services they receive. So that the quality of service can be measured by looking at the needs and interests of the community. In order for the services performed to be carried out properly, effectively and efficiently, the apparatus or employees need to improve their performance so that the public can feel satisfied when given optimal service.

Professionalism of government officials is expected to improve quality of services provided to society. Quality services will make people feel comfortable so they will be happy to collaborate with government organizations. Quality services can be created if employees who provide services have professionalism in carrying out their duties. With professionalism, employee performance will continue to increase which in turn can provide excellent service to the community.

Aspects that support the creation of good service quality in an organization are the ability and professionalism of someone to complete a job that is their duties and responsibilities. This will encourage to increase the community satisfaction index, thus supporting the realization of excellent service. With high professionalism, each employee is increasingly able to complete the tasks for which they are responsible as well as possible. The characteristics of a professional can be seen from the quality and professionalism skills. The characteristics of a professional employee are marked by their expertise in carrying out their professional duties, because they are supported by their educational background, interest, talent, ability to carry out tasks that are full of dynamic and challenging.

Public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province are employees who do not have an educational background in the field of communication, they are graduates of accounting and law majors. However, they can do their job professionally as proven by the results or answers to every question in the questionnaire distributed by researchers, most of the respondents or about 93.87% answered agree that the PRO BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province works professionally. This is because they regularly attend education and training related to public relations. The abilities they acquire through these education and training programs enable them to carry out their duties professionally so that the quality of services provided to the community can continue to be improved.

The results of the research prove that public relations who work professionally will be able to improve the quality of public relations services. With professional public relations officers, excellent service provided to the community can be realized so that it will encourage the achievement of good governance. This will lead to a high satisfaction index for the people who receive services so that good relationships are established between the two parties. The community can cooperate with the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province in overseeing the management and financial responsibility of the regional government.

The Influence of Communication Competence and Professionalism of PRO on the Quality of Public Relations Services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province

The results of this study indicate that there is an influence of communication competence and professionalism of public relations officers on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. Thus, the third alternative hypothesis (H3) proposed in this study can be accepted. This is also in line with the theory presented by Atep Adya Barata, the excellent service theory used by researchers as a basis for this research, so that the theory is declared to be defensible.

The correlation coefficient of the communication competence variable and PRO professionalism on service quality can be seen in table 8 below:

Table 8. Correlation Coefficient for X1 and X2, against Y

| Variable | N | t _{count} | t _{table} |
|---|----|--------------------|--------------------|
| Communication Competence (X1) and Professionalism (X2) on Service Quality (Y) | 36 | 43,502 | 3.28 |

Source: Results of Data Processing with SPSS version 25 of 2020

Based on the table above, it is known that PRO communication competence combined with PRO professionalism can improve the quality of services provided to the community. The influence of PRO communication competence and PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province can be proven by the finding that the Fcount value is greater than the T-table value. The value of F count is 43,502 at degrees of freedom 1 (df1) = number of variables - 1 = 3 - 1 = 2, and degrees of freedom 2 (df2) = nk = 36-3 = 33, where n = number of samples, k = number of independent variables, Ftable value in the level of confidence of significance 0.05 is 3.28, thus Fcount = 43.502 > Ftable = 3.28 with a significance level of 0.000. Since the probability of significance is much smaller than sig < 0.05, a regression model can be used to predict service quality.

The researcher cites the opinion expressed by Atep Adya Barata (Silvia, 2018: 4) who mentions 6 prime service indicators as an important step to measure service quality, namely: (1) ability; (2) attitude; (3) appearance; (4) attention; (5) action; and (6) accountability. When linked to the research results, the explanation of each of these indicators includes:

Ability is knowledge that must be possessed by an information servant as well as skills in providing excellent service to the community. This ability can include the ability to communicate effectively in the work area occupied, the ability to develop motivation and the ability to use public relations as an instrument in maintaining good relations between external and internal organizations. As with the communication competency indicator, this indicator has also been fulfilled by the public relations of the BPKPer Representative of North Sumatra Province. The results showed that they had done their job with the skills and abilities they had. They are able to establish good relationships with the community and with internal organizations such as colleagues in the field of public relations, and the inspection team and leaders in the organization.

The second indicator of service quality is attitude, which is good behavior that must be shown by servants when serving the community. Service officers must be able to adapt their attitudes to the conditions and desires of the people being served. This attitude can be shown in daily communication to the public in the form of verbal and nonverbal messages. Verbal, for example, good and polite speech when providing information services, using language that is easily understood by the public. Meanwhile, the nonverbal message is to give a sincere smile and invite the public to sit in the space provided and body movements that can create a sense of comfort for the community.

The next indicator is appearance, which is a person's ability to reflect the confidence and credibility of other parties. The competence and professionalism of a public relations officer will automatically give birth to their self-confidence so that people will feel confident when communicating with them. A public relations officer needs self-confidence in carrying out their service duties because this will create good credibility for their profession. Based on the results of the study, the respondents agreed that the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province already had a good appearance in carrying out their duties.

Attention is full concern for the community being served, both relating to attention to the needs and desires and understanding the suggestions and criticisms of the community. This indicator is one of the most important factors in realizing excellent service. Because if the public relations understand the needs of society and is able to pay attention when providing information services, then the community as the main object of excellent service will feel comfortable in dealing with public relations. The community as partners of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province in overseeing the management of regional financial responsibilities will be able and willing to cooperate well if treated with care.

The fifth indicator in prime service in order to realize quality service is action, which is a real action that must be taken in providing services to the community. Based on the results of the research, this indicator has been successfully realized by the public relations officers of the BPK Representative Office of North Sumatra Province. This concrete action, for example, when the community asks to meet with the inspection team or with the leadership of the organization to discuss something, the public relations will immediately facilitate the request. Likewise, when there is a request for information from the public, the public relations officers of the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province will immediately provide the information by following the applicable procedures.

The sixth indicator is accountability or responsibility, which is a servant's partiality to the community served as a form of concern for avoiding or minimizing losses so as to create satisfaction of the people served. Based on the research results, this indicator has been able to be realized in information services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province. Even though there are some respondents who feel that they are not being served responsibly, it seems that public relations are not willing to directly provide the information needed by the community. Things like this can lead to feelings of discomfort in the community, where they feel that the PRO is not responsible for carrying out its duties because it does not fulfill the public's request for information. However, as the researcher explained earlier, things like this can happen when the information requested by the public is information whose dissemination requires the approval of the head of the representative, so it takes longer. The bureaucratic factor seems to slow down the performance of the public relations officers, so that it should be well communicated to requesters of information regarding the procedures to be followed when certain information is needed. This is important to do so that people do not feel neglected or disadvantaged, so that the quality of service can be maintained properly.

A basic understanding of quality indicates that quality is always focused on society. Thus, the services provided are services that can fulfill the wants and expectations of the community. Because the quality of the service refers to community satisfaction, a service can be said to be of quality if it is

in accordance with the wishes and expectations of the community. Thus, government organizations should know and understand community needs and the level of community satisfaction. It is assumed that quality service can only be done by recognizing the mission of the bureaucratic organization. This mission can be used as a reference in providing excellent service to the community. The structure is sleek, flexible, fast moving, and very decentralized. Meanwhile, leadership is carried out in a democratic and transformational manner at all levels of leadership, starting from top-level leadership to lower-level leaders. Bureaucrats are required to be more creative, variable and innovative.

The responsibility of providing public information is the responsibility of the government, because the government acts as an information service provider, and the public is the recipient of information services. Likewise, information that is managed by each government agency, especially strategic information at the BPK, is the right of the public to obtain it with procedures and rules that have been regulated in law. Like reports on the results of financial audits of local governments and BUMDs in North Sumatra, it is the people's right to know through the handing over of reports whose implementation is also regulated by law. The public has the right to know the performance of each local government through the BPK audit report.

Sinambela (2011: 6) argues that theoretically, public service basically aims to satisfy society. So to achieve community satisfaction, excellent service quality is required, which is reflected by: (1) transparency, is a service that is easy to understand, services that are open and easily accessible to all those who need them and are provided adequately. (2) Accountability, is a service that can be accounted for in accordance with the provisions of the applicable regulations in law. (3) Conditional, is a service provided by an information service provider in accordance with the conditions and capabilities of the service provider, and adjusted to the needs of the community as service recipients, while still paying attention to effectiveness and efficiency. (4) Participatory, namely encouraging the public to participate in public service activities. (5) Equality of rights, where the services provided are the same without discriminating against any aspect, especially ethnicity, race, religion, class, social status, and so on. (6) The balance of rights and obligations is a form of service to the community which is provided by considering justice between the information service provider and the community as the service recipient.

The problem of the quality of public services carried out by government officials to the general public is closely related to the bureaucratic communication competence provided by the leadership to its officials. Even though communication is something that is continuously done, mistakes often occur that are not realized. For this reason, a communication that is able to build cooperation between one person and another is needed, namely by communicating effectively so that between individuals one and another will understand each other, tolerate each other, mutually complement and give each other. Thus, the potential of each individual will grow. This happens because the communication function in the organization is as a means of coordinating between various subsystems in offices.

Decision making in a government organization requires effective communication. Communication is not only by using the right method, but also the content of the message conveyed. Likewise, with strategic communication, this is not only done by listening but by a professional communication process. The final process in the communication process is the feedback given as a reconsideration of the message that has been delivered to the recipient. This feedback can be used as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of communication. Specifically, the role of communication competence is important, avoiding the leadership in helping the apparatus to obtain and develop the tasks they are assigned, so that the quality of service of an organization is getting better. And on the contrary, if a leader does not have communication competence it can have an impact on service quality that is not maximal.

It is hoped that communication competence in the institution will be able to influence the quality of services provided by bureaucratic apparatus to the community. It is hoped that healthy and good communication between sub-workers will help the development of the quality of service at the institution. With mutual openness and understanding, the apparatus will feel more familiar and can be used as discussion partners. Every employee does not only need salary and achievement in work, but also to meet the needs of social interaction. Employees who have friendly and supportive colleagues will lead them to good performance as well.

Professionalism also has an important role in improving service quality in addition to communication competence. There are several factors that are dominant in questioning professionalism in the work environment among employees. First, the intellectual capacity of the employees according to the type and nature of their work. This relates to the type and level of education of the employee concerned, and which characterizes the knowledge and expertise of these employees at work. The second is employee work standards that include procedures for completion of work and the results of the work. The third dominant factor is the moral and ethical standards of employees in carrying out their profession. This third factor requires a proving or real work process where the assessment is not only through the nature and character of employees, but also the assessment system used in a work environment.

Conclusionn

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been stated above, it can be concluded that:

1. The first alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted, namely that there is an influence of communication competence on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. The hypothesis was accepted because after processing the data, it was found that the values of the communication competence variable were greater than the t-table value. The results of this study also prove that the theory used as the basis for this research can be defensible; because based on the results of data processing, communication competence has a significant effect in improving the quality of public relations services at the BPK Representative of North Sumatra Province.
2. There is an influence between professionalism on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. This is evidenced by the finding of the t-count value of the professionalism variable of public relations officers that is greater than the t-table value, thus, the second alternative hypothesis (H2) is accepted. The results of this study at the same time proving that the theory used as the basis for this research can be defensible, because based on the results of data processing, PRO professionalism has a significant effect in improving the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province.
3. The third alternative hypothesis (H3) in the study is accepted, namely that there is a significant influence between communication competence and PRO professionalism on the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. The hypothesis is accepted because the results of data processing through simultaneous tests (F-test) show that the F-count value is greater than the F-table value so that simultaneously communication competence and PRO professionalism affect the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province. The results of this study prove that the theory used as the basis for this study can be defensible, where communication competence and professionalism of the PRO simultaneously have a significant effect in improving the quality of public relations services at BPK Representatives of North Sumatra Province.

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