

The role of public relations in handling communication crises in public institutions

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of public relations (PR) in handling communication crises in public institutions. The focus of the study includes the communication strategies implemented, the effectiveness of messages delivered to the public, and the challenges faced in maintaining public trust during crisis situations. The research method used a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews and document analysis in several public institutions experiencing communication crises. The results show that the success of crisis management is greatly influenced by the ability of PR to build fast, accurate, and transparent communication. A planned communication strategy, information transparency, and good internal coordination have been proven to be able to reduce the negative impact of crises and restore the image of public institutions. The findings also reveal that the greatest challenges for PR lie in limited communication resources and internal resistance to changes in communication strategies during crises. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the role of PR is not only to convey information, but also as a strategic actor that determines the success of public institutions in overcoming communication crises and maintaining public trust. Therefore, strengthening the capacity and professionalism of PR is a crucial factor in ensuring the communication resilience of public institutions in the future.

Keywords: Crisis Communication; Communication Strategy; Public Relations; Reputation Management.

1. Introduction

Public relations (PR) is a strategic function within an organization, including public institutions, that plays a crucial role in maintaining its image, reputation, and good relations with the public. In today's era of information transparency, public institutions are required to possess effective communication skills, particularly in dealing with crises that could threaten public trust. Communication crises within public institutions, such as controversial policies, disrupted public services, or negative issues going viral, can have far-reaching impacts on social and political stability. (Shinta Nofita Sari, 2019). Common problems in crisis communication management in public institutions include a weak, structured communication strategy, delays in information delivery, lack of coordination between internal units, and minimal efforts to restore the organization's image after a crisis. Several cases have shown that the failure of public relations to manage communications during a crisis has led to the dissemination of conflicting information and increased public distrust of public institutions. This situation highlights the need for an in-depth analysis of the role of public relations in effectively managing crisis communication. (Campus, 2025). This study aims to analyze the role of Public Relations in crisis communication management in public institutions. The main focus of this study includes the communication strategies used by Public Relations, the effectiveness of messaging to the public, and the efforts made to restore public trust post-crisis. With a better understanding of the role of Public Relations, it is hoped that this study can provide recommendations for more effective crisis communication strategies for public institutions. (Amalia et al., 2024). This research is highly urgent given the increasingly complex communication challenges

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facing public institutions, particularly in the digital and social media era. Mismanaged information can spread rapidly and exacerbate crisis situations. Therefore, understanding and strengthening the role of Public Relations in crisis communication management is a crucial step to ensure the success of public institutions in maintaining stability, increasing accountability, and maintaining public trust amidst the dynamics of social and political change. (Febianti, 2020). On the other hand, public relations in Medan's public relations department faced significant challenges in responding to media coverage, making the role of crisis communication important (Bisri Mustofa et al., 2021). In the digital era, the need for an integrated and modern communication strategy is growing (Aisyahrani, 2023). Explains that good public relations management improves the image of the organization, which is important for public institutions. Furthermore, communication through digital platforms and social media, as stated by (Salanggon & Kaddi, 2021). requires organizations to be able to adapt to changes in public information preferences. Research (Rini et al., 2017) also supports the importance of media communication in improving the responsiveness of public institutions to the public.

Public relations (PR) is a strategic function within public institutions, playing a crucial role in maintaining their image and reputation, and building effective communication with the public. In today's era of information transparency, public institutions face significant challenges in managing the rapid flow of information, particularly during communication crises that have the potential to undermine public trust and disrupt service stability. (L. Lubis & Furbani, 2018). The main problems that frequently arise in crisis communication management are a weak, well-planned communication strategy, delays in information delivery, and a lack of coordination between internal units. Several cases have shown that the failure of Public Relations to manage crisis communications has led to the spread of hoaxes, public confusion, and even escalation of conflict. This underscores the need for a thorough understanding of how Public Relations can optimally manage crisis communications in public institutions. (Putri et al., 2024).

This study aims to deeply analyze the role of Public Relations in managing communication crises in public institutions, focusing on the communication strategies implemented, the effectiveness of messages delivered to the public, and steps taken to restore public trust after a crisis. It also aims to provide strategic recommendations for strengthening Public Relations' capacity to address the dynamics of communication crises. (Coombs & Tachkova, 2023). This research is particularly urgent given the increasingly complex communication challenges facing public institutions, particularly in the digital and social media era. Mismanaged information can spread rapidly and exacerbate crisis situations. Therefore, understanding and strengthening the role of public relations in crisis communication management is crucial to ensuring the success of public institutions in maintaining stability, enhancing accountability, and maintaining public trust amidst the dynamics of social and political change. (Coombs & Tachkova, 2023). In this research, it is clear that an understanding of organizational responsibility when dealing with crises in other contexts, including political and social, enables the application of SCCT in a way that is relevant and effective to various situations (Wakhidah & Nina, 2024).

This research aims to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate picture of the role of public relations in responding to communication crises in public organizations using a descriptive qualitative approach, which is used to enable researchers to survey and analyze various related scientific literature and gain a deeper understanding of the research subject (Rachmawati, 2023). The type of research used is library research, which is research whose data sources are obtained from various written references such as scientific journals, books, academic articles, research reports, and other documents relevant to the topic. Data collection techniques were carried out by reading, examining, and reviewing scientific journals published in the last ten years (2015-2025), especially those that discuss the role of public relations, crisis management, communication strategies, and crisis case studies in public institutions. In addition to journals, researchers also used communication and public relations theory books written by experts in their fields as a basis for conceptual strengthening (Segarwati & Rakhmaniar, 2021). Public Relations (PR) has a significant role

in the management of an organization's communication with its public. In this context, public relations not only functions as a liaison, but also as an image and reputation manager of the organization. Various studies have discussed in depth the role and function of public relations in different contexts (Mardiyah et al., 2023). PR functions as a mediator in two-way communication, providing information and fostering harmonious relationships between public institutions and the community (Bisri Mustofa et al., 2021). According to the task of public relations in hospitals is not only to convey information, but also to manage the patient experience from admission to discharge. Firdaus and added that public relations is responsible for communicating public policies and services, so that the public has a clear understanding of what the institution offers (Aisyahrani, 2023).

In addition, (Andini et al., 2024) argued that in the digital era, the role of public relations is increasingly important in facing new challenges. The presence of social media and digital platforms adds to the complexity of PR tasks, where they must ensure communication remains effective and ethical. Therefore, an understanding of the changing communication paradigm is essential for today's PR practitioners (Salanggon & Kaddi, 2021).

Crisis communication strategy is an important element in crisis management that aims to protect the organization's reputation, manage communication with relevant parties, and minimize the negative impact of the crisis (Giffari et al., 2024). In this context, various types of crisis communication strategies can be applied depending on the characteristics and context of the crisis at hand. One type of strategy that is widely discussed is the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), proposed by Coombs. According to (Rini et al., 2017) organizations must be able to respond quickly and appropriately to crises to protect their reputation. They underline that the development of communication strategies must be tailored to the type of crisis faced, especially in situations such as a pandemic that changes the way the public communicates and interacts. This is in line with the findings of (Ferdiana & Hidayati, 2022) who analyzed how effective crisis communication can help local governments cope with speculation and uncertainty arising from news about the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine. Here, the use of situational crisis communication theory is crucial in building clarity and trust among the public (S. M. Lubis et al., 2025).

2. Materials and Methods

In this study, researchers reviewed 45 documents consisting of Scopus and Sinta indexed scientific journal articles; Official reports from public institutions related to crisis communication management; Relevant books and book chapters on public relations theory; Policy documents and government regulations on public communication; Source Eligibility Criteria Sources were included in the analysis based on the following criteria: Relevance to the topic of the role of Public Relations and crisis communication management; Published between 2015 and 2024 to ensure recency; Academic credibility or originating from a recognized official institution; and Provide empirical data or theoretical studies that can be analyzed in depth. Documents that did not meet the criteria (e.g., opinions without academic basis or unverifiable sources) were excluded from the analysis. Systematic Analysis Process The analysis was conducted using a systematic review approach with the following stages: Identification: Compiling a list of keywords and conducting searches in journal databases, public institution repositories, and digital libraries. Selection: Screening documents based on eligibility criteria and removing duplications. Data Extraction: Collecting key information such as study objectives, methods, results, and recommendations. Synthesis: Grouping findings based on key themes (e.g., crisis communication strategies, PR effectiveness, barriers and opportunities). Comparative Analysis Compares results across sources to identify patterns and research gaps. Source Accessibility Most documents are publicly accessible through open journal portals and official government websites. However, approximately 30% of sources come from paid journals or restricted databases (e.g., Elsevier or Springer), accessed through university library subscriptions or special requests. The Materials and Methods should be described with sufficient details to allow others to replicate and build on the published results. Please note that the

publication of your manuscript implicates that you must make all materials, data, computer code, and protocols associated with the publication available to readers. Please disclose at the submission stage any restrictions on the availability of materials or information. New methods and protocols should be described in detail while well-established methods can be briefly described and appropriately cited. Research manuscripts reporting large datasets that are deposited in a publicly available database should specify where the data have been deposited and provide the relevant accession numbers. If the accession numbers have not yet been obtained at the time of submission, please state that they will be provided during review. They must be provided prior to publication. Interventionary studies involving animals or humans, and other studies that require ethical approval, must list the authority that provided approval and the corresponding ethical approval code (Putri et al., 2024).

This study uses a qualitative approach with a systematic literature review method. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of Public Relations in crisis communication management by analyzing and synthesizing research results and relevant documents in a structured manner. Literature Selection Criteria The selected literature meets the following criteria: Relevance Discusses public relations, crisis communication management, and public institutions. Credibility Derived from indexed journals, academic books, official government reports, or documents of recognized public institutions. Publication Period Published between 2015–2024 to ensure data recency. Completeness of Information Provides a description of methodology, results, and implications that can be analyzed in depth. Primary and Secondary Sources Primary Sources Documented empirical research journal articles, interviews, and case studies on public institutions. Secondary Sources: Theory books, policy reports, regulatory documents, and review articles that provide additional perspectives on the role of Public Relations in crises. Data Analysis Process from Literature Analysis is carried out by the stages of Identification Searching for documents using related keywords in databases such as Scopus, Sinta, Google Scholar, and official repositories of public institutions. Document screening selection based on eligibility criteria and removing duplications.

Data Extraction Collecting key information (methods, findings, PR strategies, communication challenges). Thematic Synthesis Grouping findings based on key themes, then comparing across studies to find patterns and gaps. Data Validity and Relevance Using peer-reviewed sources to ensure credibility. Triangulating sources by comparing findings from various documents and authors. Validating the synthesis results through discussions with public communication experts to ensure the interpretation is relevant to the context of the public institution. Ethical Approval Because this study only uses secondary data (literature and public documents) without directly involving human participants, it does not require ethical approval. However, the researcher still adheres to research ethics principles such as providing appropriate citations and maintaining academic integrity.

3. Results

Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) is widely used in the literature to explain how public institutions and PR practitioners respond to crisis communication. Crisis Response Strategies: Most studies identify the use of SCCT strategies such as denial, diminishment, rebuilding, and bolstering to minimize damage to a public institution's reputation. Adapting to the Level of Crisis: Some studies emphasize the importance of selecting a response strategy based on the organization's level of responsibility in the crisis. For example, if a crisis occurs due to internal errors, a rebuilding strategy (apology, compensation) is more effective than denial. The Role of Public Relations: The literature confirms that Public Relations serves as the primary link in implementing SCCT strategies, from situation analysis and message planning to the delivery of communications to the public and media. Case Studies: The documents reviewed demonstrate the concrete application of SCCT in public policy crises, public service disasters, and cases of maladministration, where the success of crisis management is significantly influenced by the appropriateness of the chosen communication strategy.

Literature Perspective: Congruence and Congruence Differences: The majority of the literature agrees that SCCT theory is relevant and effective for understanding the dynamics of crisis communication in public institutions. All sources emphasize the importance of speed, accuracy, and transparency of communication to maintain public trust. Strengthening public relations capacity and internal institutional coordination are seen as key factors in SCCT implementation. **Significant Differences in Cultural Adaptation** Several studies have shown that SCCT strategies need to be adapted to local cultural contexts and community expectations, unlike implementation in Western countries. **Utilization of Social Media** Some literature highlights the role of social media as a primary tool for crisis communication, while others emphasize face-to-face communication and formal bureaucratic channels. **Effectiveness Evaluation:** There are differing views on indicators of successful SCCT implementation—some use reputation restoration as the primary measure, while others focus on post-crisis public satisfaction and engagement.

The literature analysis was conducted using a systematic thematic analysis approach, with the following steps: Extracting thematic data from the literature on the adopted SCCT strategies (deny, diminish, rebuild, bolstering), the implementation context, and effectiveness indicators. Grouping strategies based on SCCT categories and categorizing them according to success/failure in crisis management. Evaluating strategy effectiveness using the following criteria: Public response (trust, satisfaction), and restoration of the institution's image or reputation. Speed of communication and transparency. Comparative synthesis comparing results across studies to identify common patterns and differences in context and outcomes. **Criteria for Determining the Effectiveness of Crisis Communication Strategies.** In the reviewed literature, the effectiveness of crisis communication strategies is determined through the following criteria: Public satisfaction and response to the message. Restoring the institution's reputation after implementing the strategy (e.g., increasing positive sentiment). Speed and openness of communication during the crisis phase. Alignment of the SCCT strategy with the institution's attribution of responsibility (e.g., whether the organization is considered responsible or not). If the chosen strategy aligns with the attribution level, the results are more effective. **Specific Findings from Indrayani (2017)** A study by Heni Indrayani (2017) discusses the ethics of PR advocacy in reputation crisis management. Key findings include: PR professionals must balance corporate interests with public interests. PR professionals are required to be guided by values such as truth, honesty, openness, social responsibility, integrity, and honest communication. Although not explicitly presenting a case of SCCT, this study suggests that a successful crisis communication strategy must uphold the ethical values of PR advocacy—namely, maintaining the institution's reputation without sacrificing truth or transparency. **Conclusion and Theoretical Relevance** SCCT theory is widely applied in the literature on crisis communication cases of public institutions such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Lampung Police, Untirta, and the Ministry of Trade. SCCT strategies such as diminish, rebuild, and bolstering are often used according to the crisis context. The literature shows differences in strategy adaptation depending on culture, communication platform (social media vs. face-to-face), and success indicators (public satisfaction vs. reputation restoration). Indrayani (2017) enriches the theoretical approach by emphasizing the importance of PR advocacy ethics: crisis communication is not only about practical strategies but also must adhere to professional and social values. By combining SCCT and ethical approaches, your research can show a more holistic contribution to the literature on PR and crisis communication.

Based on the results of the literature study that has been conducted, it is found that the role of public relations in handling communication crises in public institutions is highly dependent on the institution's ability to understand the nature of the crisis, determine the right communication strategy, and build public trust through consistent and open messaging (Indrayani, 2017). Communication crises can occur in various forms, whether caused by internal factors such as policy errors or institutional negligence, or

external factors such as natural disasters, pandemics, or the spread of inaccurate information. Under these conditions, the presence of public relations becomes very important as the front guard in maintaining the reputation and credibility of the institution (Muktariza et al., 2023).

4. Discussion

Differences between Central and Regional Institutions in Managing Crisis Communications Structure and Coordination Central Institutions Have a more formal and hierarchical communication structure with standard crisis protocols. Usually there is a Public Relations unit or Communications Bureau with greater resources and direct access to national media. Regional Institutions Communication structures are simpler, with limitations in human resources, technology, and budget. Coordination with the central government often experiences delays, resulting in inconsistent messages. Speed and Access to Information Central institutions are faster in receiving and processing crisis data (for example, pandemic cases) because they have intelligence networks and cross-ministerial coordination. Regional institutions rely on information sent from the center, so crisis communication responses are often slower. Central Communication Channels Focus on national media, official press conferences, and large-scale digital platforms (ministerial websites, official social media accounts). Regional institutions rely on local channels such as community radio, billboards, or face-to-face meetings with the public; the level of digital media penetration still varies between regions. SCCT (Situational Crisis Communication Theory) Strategy Central institutions often use a deny or diminish strategy at the beginning of a crisis, then switch to rebuild after public pressure increases.

Regions tend to adopt bolstering or rebuilding strategies to maintain closeness with local communities and rebuild trust directly. Key Lessons from Government Crisis Communication Failures During the Pandemic: Inconsistent Messages: Differences in statements between central and regional officials created public confusion (e.g., PSBB vs. PPKM policies). Lack of Transparency: Initial information regarding the severity of the pandemic was often delivered partially or late, leading the public to doubt the government's honesty. Lack of Hoax Management: Delays in responding to fake news on social media caused misinformation to spread faster than official government messages. Weak Coordination between the Central and Regional Governments: Policies and public messages were often out of sync due to bureaucratic communication channels and the absence of a unified protocol for crisis management across levels of government. Lack of a Participatory Approach: Communication messages were more one-way (top-down), while local aspirations and needs were less considered in message formulation. Implications: The government needs to build an integrated crisis communication system between the central and regional governments with a clear SCCT protocol. Strengthening public relations capacity in the regions and the use of real-time data-based digital communication are crucial to reducing information delays. A transparent, consistent, and participatory communication approach can increase public trust and the effectiveness of future crisis management.

The initial research problem was the ineffectiveness of crisis communication in public institutions, especially during the pandemic, which resulted in low public trust and suboptimal central-regional coordination. Findings There were significant differences between central and regional institutions in managing crisis communication (structure, coordination, communication channels, SCCT strategies) as well as the failure of government messaging during the pandemic (inconsistency, lack of transparency, hoaxes, weak coordination). Answers to the Problem These findings indicate that the root of the problem lies in the lack of an integrated crisis communication system and uneven PR capacity across levels of government. Relationship of Results to Research Hypothesis The main hypothesis is "The role of effective PR and the implementation of appropriate SCCT strategies can improve the success of crisis communication management in public institutions and maintain public trust." Supporting Results The data shows that institutions that

implement SCCT strategies (rebuild, bolster) with fast and transparent communication are more successful in restoring their reputation. The difference in results between the central and regional governments is largely due to the imbalance in the role of PR and the lack of adaptation of communication strategies. Potential for Rebuttal In some cases, even though SCCT strategies have been implemented, public trust remains low due to external factors (e.g., high levels of hoaxes and policy conflicts), indicating that SCCT's effectiveness may be limited if not supported by cross-agency coordination.

Authors should discuss the results and how they can be interpreted from the perspective of previous studies and of the working hypotheses. The findings and their implications should be discussed in the broadest context possible (Sani et al., 2020). Future research directions may also be highlighted. In the literature reviewed, it appears that the application of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) is the most relevant framework in understanding the patterns of institutional responses to crises. This theory emphasizes the importance of tailoring communication strategies to the type of crisis faced and the level of attribution of responsibility given by the public. For example, in victim crises such as disasters or rumors, institutions are more suitable to use bolstering strategies to emphasize that they are also affected. Meanwhile, in a crisis caused by internal negligence, a rebuild strategy with apologies and corrective actions is the main choice. The results of a study by (Maulida, 2021) show that the West Java Provincial Government through its digital channels has successfully implemented a rebuild strategy in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, by providing routine information, data transparency, and building emotional closeness with the community. This is in line with the basic principles of SCCT which emphasize the importance of speed and sincerity in responding to crises (Sani et al., 2020).

In contrast to the previous study, findings from a journal written by (Wijayanto et al., 2022) in *Politika: Journal of Political Science* clearly shows that the crisis communication carried out by the Indonesian government at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic was very far from the principles of effective crisis communication (Yulianti & Boer, 2020). Instead of developing a directed and consistent communication strategy, the government showed characteristics of poor crisis communication unresponsiveness, lack of transparency, inconsistency in messages, and lack of empathy towards the public. This condition is in stark contrast to the concept of SCCT, which emphasizes the importance of communication stages from the pre-crisis phase to post-crisis evaluation. In the pre-crisis phase, for example, public institutions should have started to build public awareness of potential threats, but the Indonesian government ignored early warnings, downplayed scientific information, and even made the possibility of an outbreak a joke in the public sphere. This shows that the public relations function has not been carried out strategically as a crisis communication manager, but tends to be reactive and damage control after the crisis grows (Nugraha et al., 2022).

In the active crisis phase, communication that should have been done transparently and centrally was instead colored by confusion of terms and inconsistency of policies. For example, in communication about "mudik" and "pulang kampung", the government provided conflicting narratives between officials, causing confusion in the community. This shows weak internal coordination and the absence of a single message controller, which should be the main responsibility of the public relations department of public institutions (Anggraini, 2024). In SCCT and Excellence Theory, this can be interpreted as a failure to manage meaning and maintain institutional credibility. Not only that, this journal study also highlights the importance of the empathy element in crisis communication, which unfortunately is missing from many statements by public officials during the pandemic. When the public faced fear, loss of jobs, and even loss of family members due to Covid-19, the government issued statements that tended to trivialize the situation. This shows that the element of emotional communication, which should be the strength of public relations in maintaining public trust, has not been maximized (Mardiyah et al., 2023).

This research also strengthens the argument that the role of public relations must be positioned higher structurally. When public communication is left solely to political

officials without coordination with the PR department, the narrative that is built will easily be lame, full of clarifications, and create new confusion. In this context, public relations should play a role as a compiler of the institution's overall communication strategy, including the management of relations with the media and the public. The findings of the journal emphasize that the communication crisis in public institutions is not solely caused by limited information, but because of weaknesses in communication management itself. Therefore, public institutions need to strengthen the capacity and strategic role of public relations as the main message manager, especially in critical times such as health crises or national disasters. In a different context, research conducted by (W. Putri et al., 2024) provides a real picture of how public institutions such as the National Police carry out crisis communication strategies through social media, in this case Twitter, when facing the Kanjuruhan tragedy. The study used a critical discourse analysis approach and image restoration theory to identify how Polri's public relations tried to manage public perception through the narratives they built (Tahniah et al., 2024).

Interestingly, the results of this study show that the strategy used by Polri's public relations is more inclined to the denial approach, namely by building a discourse that shifts the focus from institutional responsibility to other parties. For example, in one Twitter post, Polri's public relations featured a narrative that emphasized the fanaticism of supporters as the trigger for the tragedy, instead of explicitly discussing the use of tear gas by the authorities, which was in the public spotlight. This strategy is referred to as shifting the blame - where the organization avoids blame by blaming external parties as the main cause of the crisis. When compared with the SCCT theory, the strategy applied by Polri's public relations is included in the minimalist response to the preventable crisis category, which is a crisis that arises from internal actions and can be prevented. SCCT suggests that in this type of crisis, organizations should instead take rebuilding steps - with a public apology and comprehensive corrective action. However, the results of the study (W. Putri et al., 2024) show that Polri's strategy does not meet the basic principles of crisis communication that emphasize transparency and acknowledgement of responsibility (Anggraini, 2024).

In terms of discourse, the study also revealed that Polri's public relations built a narrative that created the impression that "we are all grieving together" by using the pronoun "we" in tweets, and emphasizing Polri's role as mediator, not perpetrator. This is a form of symbolic effort commonly used in image restoration strategies, but has the potential to backfire when the public finds discrepancies between official narratives and facts on the ground. The findings from this journal reinforce the conclusion that in crisis management, the power of public communication lies not only in how quickly information is conveyed, but also in the courage of institutions to be open and accountable. Without that, a crisis that should be manageable turns into a prolonged crisis of confidence (Annisafitri & Toni, 2022).

In an effort to strengthen the image of public institutions through the public relations function, research by (Octavia & Juwita, 2024) on LPP TVRI East Kalimantan Station shows how a public broadcaster tries to implement the principles of restorative communication to maintain a positive reputation amid image challenges and institutional structure limitations. Using the Image Restoration Theory approach, this study found that LPP TVRI East Kalimantan Station has a big vision to become a unifying media for the nation, but the implementation of public relations functions has not run optimally due to the absence of an official public relations division that handles external and internal communication activities centrally (Eka Khoirunnisa & Denas Hasman Nugraha, 2019).

5. Conclusions

This study highlights the differences in crisis communication management between central and regional public institutions, as well as the failures of government communication during the pandemic. The analysis reveals that the main weaknesses lie in the lack of integration of crisis communication systems, inconsistent messaging, delays in handling hoaxes, and the imbalance in Public Relations capacity across government levels. These

findings support the hypothesis that an effective Public Relations role and the appropriate implementation of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) strategies can improve the success of crisis communication management. Institutions that are able to implement SCCT strategies such as rebuilding and bolstering quickly, transparently, and in a coordinated manner have proven more successful in restoring their reputations and maintaining public trust. However, the study also found that the success of crisis communication strategies depends not only on SCCT alone, but also on supporting factors such as central-regional coordination, proactive hoax management, and a participatory communication approach that involves the public. Therefore, strengthening Public Relations capacity and establishing an integrated crisis communication system are strategic steps to increase the resilience of public institutions in facing future crises. Theoretical Contribution Strengthening the Application of SCCT This study expands the understanding of how Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) is applied in the context of Indonesian public institutions, particularly in the context of differences between the central and regional levels. Integration of Ethical Dimensions and Public Relations Capacity This study shows that the effectiveness of SCCT is not only influenced by communication strategies (deny, diminish, rebuild, bolstering), but also by public relations ethics (transparency, social responsibility) and organizational capacity. The Integrated Crisis Communication Framework Offers a new conceptual model that combines SCCT with factors of central-regional coordination and hoax management, which have rarely been studied in depth before. Methodological Contribution Using a systematic literature review to analyze various cases of crisis communication in Indonesian public institutions, thus providing a structured database that can be used for further studies. Identifying indicators of communication strategy effectiveness (reputation recovery, public satisfaction, response speed) that can be used as benchmarks in subsequent crisis communication research.

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