

The Effectiveness of Organizational Communication in Improving the Quality of Private Universities in Gorontalo

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Abstract

This study aims to prove the existence of communication in organizations, especially in universities that have the effectiveness to change the attitudes and behavior of the academic community in an effort to improve the quality of higher education. Through a quantitative approach using path analysis and the results of questionnaire data processing on 182 respondents from two private universities in Gorontalo Province, namely Universitas Ichsan and Universitas Pohuwato. It can be concluded that communication in the organization has a significant effect on the quality of higher education. Aspects that contribute to organizational communication are aspects of relationships, pleasure, and action. Each aspect of organizational communication has different effects on both organizations. The differences that arise between the two universities are also shown by the differences in the dominant aspects in relation to improving the quality of private universities in Gorontalo.

Keywords: *Organizational Communication, Quality, Higher Education.*

INTRODUCTION

Human interaction in an organization is a must. The interaction of organizational members can only take place with communication. Communication occupies a major place because the structure of the breadth and scope of the organization as a whole is determined by communication techniques. Masmuh (2008) stated that, communication plays a very important role in constructing and reconstructing thoughts through instructions conveyed, both the message of the highest leader (top level) to the middle leader (middle level) even to subordinates.

As an organization, Higher Education is seen as an information center that has its own organizational structure with its own functions. In this structure, there is a hierarchical relationship, between superiors and subordinates, as well as vice versa between subordinates and superiors and between subordinates and fellow subordinates. In carrying out their respective duties, a line of command or communication flow, line of instructions and line of information are required. In the perspective of higher education management, Indrajit, at al. (2006) stated that communication plays a very important role in constructing and reconstructing thoughts through the instructions conveyed, both the highest leadership message (rector) to the middle leaders (deans) and even to subordinates (lecturers).

The current problem of higher education management is related to the quality of higher education. The quality of higher education in Indonesia when viewed from the aspect of accreditation, both institutional accreditation and accreditation of study programs has not been maximized. Various efforts have been made to improve the quality of higher education, both internal in this case the university and external in this case the government. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology through various policies such as Permendikbud Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards which has regulated the quality system of higher education, on the other hand the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) has made efforts to monitor and evaluate the quality of higher education through monitoring universities and study programs through accreditation and reaccreditation. On the other hand, universities through the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) have made various efforts to improve quality.

Judging from the distribution of accreditation of universities and study programs in Indonesia, the efforts made by the government and universities in improving the quality of higher education have not been maximized. There are problems that arise in the absorption of college alumni into the world of work decreasing, there is a mismatch between the curriculum set and the achievements of graduates, the quality of lecturers has more status as teaching staff, until the implementation of the tridharma of lecturers is maximally fulfilled.

From the 4,523 universities in Indonesia, those that dominate good accreditation ratings are state universities, while many private universities still have B or Good accreditation ratings and even many private universities are not accredited either institutional accreditation or study program accreditation. Based on data from the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT), there are 117 universities in 2021 that do not have institutional accreditation. There are 1,774 universities that are only accredited C or Good and 102 universities that are accredited A or superior. As explained earlier, one of the indicators of higher education quality is the level of accreditation, thus if we refer to the data from the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT), the quality of higher education is uneven, both in terms of the classification of accreditation ratings and in terms of higher education service areas throughout Indonesia.

Researchers are interested in analyzing organizational communication in efforts to improve the quality of private universities, based on several studies. First, from the results of observations, there are several private universities, especially in Gorontalo Province, experiencing a decrease in the quality of both the quality of education as seen from the accreditation rankings, the quality of research, and the quality of community service along with the occurrence of internal college problems, for example problems between the organizing body in this case the foundation and the executive body in this case the rectorate. Not to mention the problems that occur between the rector and the vice rector, between the rectorate and the dean and even lecturers with the rectorate or

lecturers with the foundation. This condition is usually characterized by friction that leads to a shift in structural positions or even the dismissal of lecturers. From the accreditation aspect, 103 study programs in private universities in Gorontalo Province, there are 26 study programs accredited B or Excellent, 54 study programs accredited C or Good and there are 23 study programs that have not been accredited.

Another assumption, related to the importance of organizational communication in improving the quality of private university outcomes, is that the center of attention of external quality assurance in the case of the National Accreditation Board for Higher Education (BAN-PT) is more on the issue of educational processing. Furthermore, the smooth processing of education is supported by educational components consisting of students, education personnel, curriculum, and learning facilities.

In this context, communication has a strategic role in higher education organizations. In the view of Wayne and Faules (2014) that Effective communication can be an adhesive for organizational members. With the existence of organizational communication in higher education, cooperation will be created in order to achieve the goals that exist in the vision, mission, goals and objectives set by the college, one of which is the creation of higher education quality.

In this study, organizational communication is developed by looking at aspects of communication effectiveness in improving the quality of private university outcomes in Gorontalo Province. Communication effectiveness according to Sutardji (2016) consists of 5 (five) indicators, namely understanding, pleasure, influence on attitudes, improved relationships, and action. Understanding is interpreted as an indication that there is a situation where the communicant (message recipient) really understands the message conveyed or received thoroughly in accordance with the intention of the communicator (message sender). The more understanding a message is, the more effective the communication is. For this purpose, communicators and communicants (message recipients) must both understand their respective functions. Meanwhile, pleasure is understood as an indication that there is a pleasant situation for both parties. The more pleasant the communication situation, the more effective the communication. The effect on attitude is understood as an indication that there is a change in attitude or behavior formed from previously existing principles. The more there is a change in attitude, the more effective the communication.

Therefore, the successful implementation of higher education quality lies in the success of the communication process that occurs in the organization to form values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and norms that explain organizational goals. The urgency of organizational communication in this study is to see the effectiveness of communication in the same or different organizations and the most dominant aspects of organizational communication that play a role in improving the quality of higher education. The urgency is something new in an effort to improve the quality of private universities.

METHODS

The data population in this study were all lecturers at private universities in Gorontalo Province. From the Higher Education Database (PDDikti) data in 2022, it was found that there were 11 private universities with 103 study programs and 841 permanent lecturers. The number of samples in the study was 182 people. With details of Ichsan University estimated 133 samples and Pohuwato University estimated 49 samples. The data collection technique uses a questionnaire as the main data collection tool which is then supported also by the results of interviews and observations. Data analysis been used, namely descriptive statistical analysis methods and inferential statistical analysis through Path Analysis processing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Effectiveness of Organizational Communication at Ichsan University and Pohuwato University

The indicators of effective communication developed in this study refer to the concept developed by Sutardji (2016), namely understanding (X1.1), pleasure (X1.2), influence on attitudes (X1.3), better relationships (X1.4), and action (X1.5). Each indicator consists of two questions in the form of a questionnaire.

Measurement of communication effectiveness for Ichsan University using 133 respondents spread across 15 study programs. While, measurement of communication effectiveness for Pohuwato University uses 49 respondents spread across 13 study programs. Data collection uses questionnaires as the main data collection tool. Besides that, interview data is also used with secondary data gathered from BPS, PDDIKTI, LLDIKTI Region XVI.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents' Opinions about the Effectiveness of Organizational Communication at Ichsan University.

Indicator	Understanding				Fun				Attitude and Behavior				Relationship				Action			
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10	
Item	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Very suitable	31	23,3	83	62,4	31	23,3	0	0	67	50,4	83	62,4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
As per	52	39,1	50	37,6	52	39,1	83	62,4	66	49,6	50	37,6	83	62,4	83	62,4	31	23,3	31	23,3
Not suitable	0	0	0	0	50	37,6	50	37,6	0	0	0	0	50	37,6	50	37,6	50	39,1	52	37,6
Very Unsuitable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	37,6	50	39,1
Total	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0	133	0

Source: Data Processing, 2023

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents' Opinions about the Effectiveness of Organizational Communication at Pohuwato University.

Indicator	Understanding				Fun				Attitude and Behavior				Relationship				Action			
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10	
Item	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Very suitable	0	0	28	57,1	0	0	31	63,3	11	22,4	28	57,1	31	63,3	31	63,3	11	22,4	11	22,4
As per	11	22,4	21	42,9	11	22,4	18	36,7	18	36,7	21	42,9	18	36,7	18	36,7	18	36,7	18	36,7
Not suitable	20	40,8	0	0	20	40,8	0	0	20	40,8	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	40,8	20	40,8
Very Unsuitable	18	36,7	0	0	18	36,7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100	49	100

Source: Data Processing, 2023

Based on tables 1 and 2, the effectiveness of communication at Ihsan University with understanding indicators (X1.1) is in good condition, from the two questions given to respondents there are 23.3% who really understand the message conveyed and 39.1% who understand the message. This condition indicates that the flow of information related to the implementation of tridharma is well understood. With a good understanding of information, tasks and functions are also well coordinated, this can be seen from question item two, there are 62.4% who understand their respective tasks and functions. In contrast to the understanding indicator at Pohuwato University shows a less good condition, there are 40.8% who respond less well.

The pleasure indicator (X1.2) consists of question items, first, a pleasant communication situation and second, a change in attitude and behavior towards a positive direction. For Ihsan University. These two items show a positive direction where there are 62.4% and 37.6% who give answers to pleasant communication situations but in this condition, there are 37.6% of respondents who give answers that the communication situation is less conducive. Although the conditions in the aspect of comfort are positive in these two universities, Pohuwato University has a less pleasant communication situation than Ihsan University, which is only 33.4% and even most of the respondents 40.8% gave unfavorable responses.

The results of observations in the field show that indications of respondents who give answers that the communication situation is less pleasant due to the polarization or group of lecturers at Pohuwato University. With a number of lecturers who feel the communication climate is less pleasant, it has an impact on changes in attitude and behavior. The results of respondents' answers to the attitude and behavior indicator (X1.3) at Ihsan University show that there are 50.4% who show very appropriate changes in attitudes and behavior and 48.6% who are appropriate. In contrast, at Pohuwato University only 22.4% showed the expected attitudes and behaviors. This data illustrates that these two universities are different in terms of changes in attitudes and behaviors. The observation shows that institutionally the two universities have different experiences, Ihsan University was established earlier, since 2001 while Pohuwato University was only established in 2018.

Conditions at Pohuwato University, when viewed from the level of lecturer attendance in teaching where there are lecturers who only carry out less than half of the meetings each semester. In terms of research and service lecturers are also uneven. If you look at the data on the level of pleasure at Pohuwato University, you can draw a red thread that this factor is what makes the low attitude change in lecturers in carrying out the tridharma of higher education. Pleasure is understood as an indication that there is a pleasant situation for both parties. The more pleasant the communication situation, the more effective the communication. Influence on attitude is understood as an indication that there is a change in attitude or behavior formed from previously existing principles. The more there is a change in attitude, the more effective the communication.

The better relationship indicator (X1.4) consists of two question items. The first item is about interpersonal relationships between lecturers and lecturers, lecturers and leaders, lecturers and students, and top-level leaders (rectorate) with middle level (deans, study programs and other technical implementation units). Ichsan University based on the results of the questionnaire found that there were 62.4% who stated that the interpersonal relationship between lecturers was good but also not a few respondents, namely 37.6% who gave the answer that the interpersonal relationship of the academic community was not good. Unlike at Pohuwato University, the relationship with lecturers is better. The data shows that 63.3% gave the answer that the interpersonal relationship between lecturers was good and even very good. This relationship is more due to the common experience of 'less fun'. This condition is reinforced by the opinion of Cangara (2022) that similarities in communication can be compared to two circles overlapping each other. The overlapping area is called the frame of experience (field of reference), which shows the similarities between A and B in certain matters such as language or symbols.

The results of observations obtained at Pohuwato University, respondents who gave positive answers about personal relationships because of the interaction of lecturers in informal spaces. For example, the academic community, especially lecturers, routinely carry out family gathering activities that can reduce the level of boredom and can restore a sense of harmony in work relationships. In contrast to Ichsan University, the intensity of interaction occurs on campus in formal spaces such as meetings in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs at the university, faculty, and study program levels or in other technical implementation units. For Ichsan University, there is a uniqueness to Ichsan University regarding formal meetings.

The last indicator of effective communication is action (X1.5). The action aspect consists of two question items, namely about programs to influence others and realization or real actions to influence these actions. From the results of data collection through questionnaires, Ichsan University found that only 23.3% of respondents gave a positive response about the program prepared by the campus to influence the real actions of respondents. There were 39.1% who responded negatively and even 37.6% who responded very poorly. The same data at Pohuwato University, there were 40.8% of respondents who gave answers that the activity program in implementing the tridharma of higher education was also less than optimal.

There is an uniqueness that occurs at Ichsan University, which good understanding actually shows decreased pleasure. This means that not all understanding shows pleasure. Different at Pohuwato University, low understanding is followed by low pleasure. Communication effectiveness for attitude and behavior aspects showed different trends in the two universities. Ichsan University, the pleasure aspect shows a decreasing trend but the aspect of attitude and behavior change shows a good trend. Unlike Pohuwato University, the understanding aspect is less good followed by the fun aspect and attitude and behavior. For the relationship aspect, these two universities have different conditions. Ichsan University has a rigid relationship based more on work

relations while the relationship pattern at Pohuwato University is dynamic and more based on informal relations.

For the action aspect, both universities have the same trend, namely the lack of programmed actions related to standardized work plans. Research findings in relation to effective communication at private universities in Gorontalo Province, namely Ihsan University and Pohuwato University, are as follows:

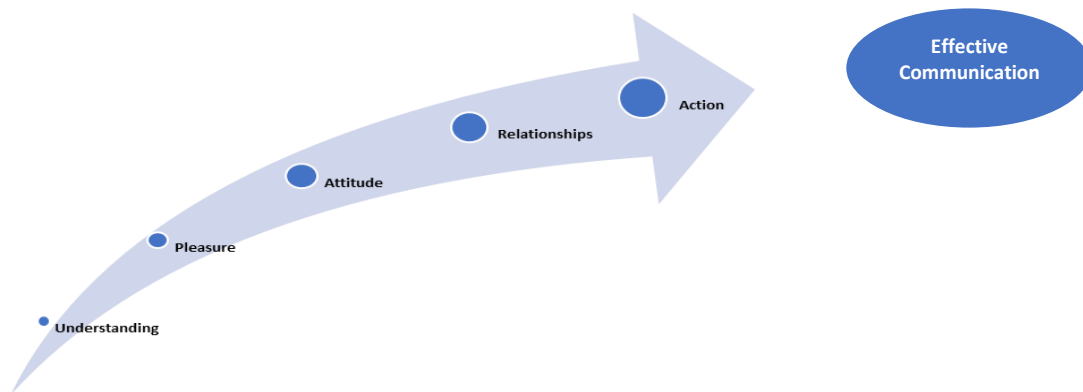


Figure 1. The ideal perspective developed by Sutardji (2016)

From Figure 1 above, it can be explained that there are five aspects that affect the effectiveness of communication in the organization, starting with a good understanding of the message which possibly increase pleasure, attitude/behavior, relationships, and in the end will give birth to the expected pattern or action.

Contribution of Aspects on Effective Organizational Communication in Improving the Quality of Higher Education

The results of data analysis found that only three aspects contributed to the effectiveness of communication in improving the quality of university outcomes. These aspects are pleasure, relationships, and action.

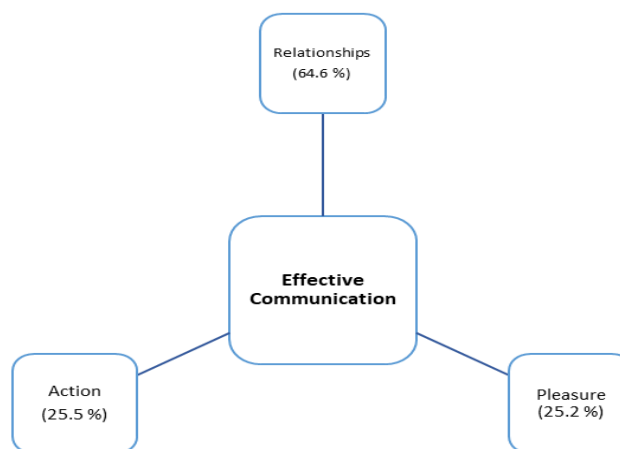


Figure 2. Contribution of aspects in organizational communication to the improvement quality of Ihsan University.

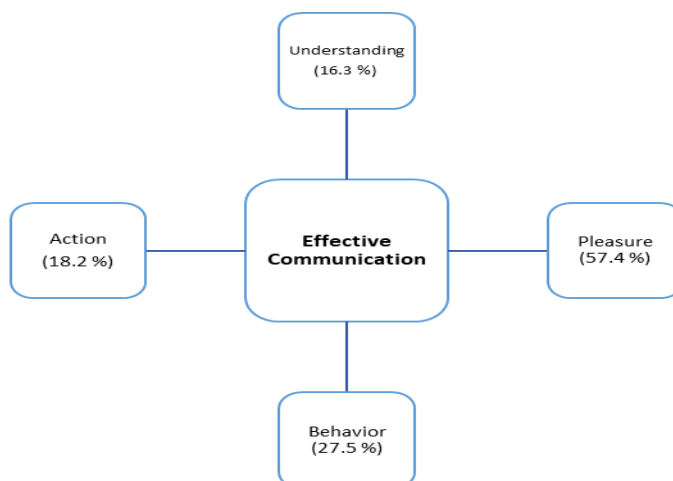


Figure 3. Contribution of aspects in organizational communication to the improvement quality of Pohuwato University.

Based on Figure 2, it can be explained that the contribution of the influence of the most significant aspect on relationships in organizational communication, measuring the quality of the output of private universities is 64.6%, then followed by the aspect of action by 25.5%, and the aspect of pleasure by 25.2%. While in Figure 3, it is explained that among five aspects in effectiveness of organizational communication, there are four aspects that have contributed to improving the quality of Pohuwato University, namely aspects of pleasure by 57.4%, aspects of behavior by 27.5%, aspects of action by 18.2%, and aspects of understanding by 16.3%.

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of organizational communication using the indicators described above in two universities, Ichsan University from the aspect of understanding is better than Pohuwato University. The better understanding condition at Ichsan University is because some of the information obtained occurs in formal activities such as in the meeting room. This condition causes the situation of communicants (lecturers) to understand well the message conveyed or received thoroughly in accordance with the intention of the communicator (leader). the more understanding a message, the more effective the communication that occurs. For this purpose, communicators and communicants (message recipients) have understood their respective functions. Meanwhile, the pleasure aspect is understood as an indication that there is a pleasant situation for both parties. The more pleasant the communication situation has been build up, the more effective the communication will be. In ideal ways, the more understanding the message, the more likely it is that there will be a common understanding between the communicator and the communicant and lead to the creation of pleasure for the both sides.

The effectiveness of communication from the aspect of pleasure shows that the two universities have different conditions. The level of pleasure at Ichsan University based on the data varies greatly, there are lecturers who show a good level of pleasure

but there are also some lecturers who respond less well. In contrast to Pohnuwo University, the level of pleasure is at the level of good, less good, and very unfavorable. The effectiveness of communication for the attitude and behavior aspects shows different trends in the two universities. Ichsan Gorontalo University, the pleasure aspect shows a downward trend, but the attitude and behavior change aspect shows a good trend. Unlike Pohnuwo University, the understanding aspect is less good, followed by the fun aspect and attitude and behavior. For the aspect of relationships, these two universities have different conditions. Ichsan Gorontalo University has a rigid relationship based more on work relations while the relationship pattern at Pohnuwo University is dynamic and more based on informal relations. For the aspect of action, both universities have the same trend, namely the lack of programmed actions related to standardized work plans.

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