



Management of Communication Media of Regional Disaster Management Agency in Mitigating the Impact of Covid19 Omicron Variant in South Kalimantan

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Abstract

The spread of the new variant of the COVID-19 virus is a continuous polemic in the community. The South Kalimantan government has taken more action to handle it by managing the communication media so that people don't panic about this new variant. This study discusses the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) Disaster Communication Model in Combating the Spread of the Omicron Variant of Covid-19 in South Kalimantan. This study refers to the theory of Disaster Communication in which there are several indicators with the following results; *Planning*, the South Kalimantan BPBD in collaboration with the South Kalimantan Communication and Information Technology and the Covid-19 task force in managing information related to Covid-19. Then, *Organizing* is dividing the tasks in each field to respond to the pandemic situation. Furthermore, *Actuating* is a communication media that is managed in an integrated manner by the Communication and Information Technology of South Kalimantan province. And the last one is *Controlling*, which is listening to the possibility of a response from the community so that all forms of response and answers that are given depend on the intended field.

Keywords: Media Management, Disaster Communication, Omicron

INTRODUCTION

As is known that the spread of the Corona virus or commonly called Covid-19 is still ongoing throughout the world. Even though the community has been given the vaccine, the type of covid that can mutate quickly makes the risk of the emergence of new variants occurring at any time. The Omicron variant is confirmed to have been discovered 23 months since the Corona virus first appeared in China.

On November 25, 2021, which is 23 months since the first reported case of Covid-19 and after a global estimate of 260 million cases and 5.2 million deaths, a new variant of Covid-19, the omicron strain, was detected. Omicron emerged in the world after a wide range of negative impacts on the social, mental and economic well-being sectors. This virus actually appears in the midst of people who have been given vaccine immunity. In fact, even though the community has carried out a complete vaccine, the community is still at risk of contracting this type of virus.

The third wave of Covid-19 in the form of a new variant of Omicron began to appear in various regions, especially on the island of Java. Closed from the *Gatra.com* page, the first case of Omicron in Indonesia was detected in a cleaning



officer with the initials N who worked at the RSDC Wisma Atlet Kemayoran Jakarta on December 16, 2021. The Minister of Health in a press statement instructed the task force to handle Covid19 to prepare an isolation protocol independently as well as providing medicine and oxygen. In addition, the Minister of Health also appealed that WFH (Work from home) and WFO (Work from office) were still enforced according to the policies of their respective agencies. (South Kalimantan is alert to Omicron, when there is an increase in the number of trips | Kalimantan, n.d.)

Then on January 21, 2022, a new case of Omicron was found in West Kalimantan. The spread that is getting closer to the South Kalimantan region has made the government more prepared to handle the prevention of this new variant. Quoted from the *Inews.id* page, various preparations have been prepared to deal with the possibility of the emergence of the omicron wave in South Kalimantan. In the upstream sector, the entrances to South Kalimantan will continue to be screened. This includes continuing to use the *PeduliLindungi* application and running 5M and 3T. As for the downstream sector, each region in South Kalimantan is asked to make preparations starting from oxygen, medicines to quarantine houses or Centralized Isolation (isoters). (Covid-19 Omicron Variant Has Not Entered South Kalimantan, 2022)

Based on the <https://corona.kalselprov.go.id/> page, it was informed that in South Kalimantan there were 2394 people who died due to Covid-19, with a total of 71331 cases (08/02/2022). With so many deaths due to this outbreak, the South Kalimantan Provincial Government is trying to prevent the occurrence of a further wave of the Omicron variant of covid by preparing the South Kalimantan BPBD for disaster emergency response, namely the Regional Disaster Management Agency, whose agency is tasked with handling various disaster issues that occurred in the province. South Kalimantan region. BPBD is an agency under the auspices of BNPB (National Disaster Management Agency) based in Jakarta. South Kalimantan BPBD itself during the Pandemic period has contributed a lot in handling Covid-19, including joining the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Covid-19, participating in Covid volunteer training, preparing quarantine places for Covid sufferers, conducting periodic spraying in areas prone to the spread of the virus, and campaigning for handling and prevention procedures for the spread of Covid-19.

In Law Number 24 of 2007 concerning disaster management, the definition of disaster is an event or series of events that threatens and disrupts people's lives and livelihoods, caused by natural and non-natural factors as well as human factors, resulting in human casualties, environmental damage, property losses, and psychological impacts (Arif & Lestari, 2021). Adhering to the basic formulation of the disaster, disaster management is not only in the form of distributing logistical materials, but handling in the form of moral support is also necessary for people who are being hit by a dangerous epidemic. Moreover, in the midst of unstable economic and social conditions due to a prolonged pandemic, people's emotions about the emergence of new variants of Covid-19 will be high. Through communication that is guided by ethics and the substance of communication in disaster management with the aim of gaining a common understanding of a disaster that is being faced, the management of communication media is very important in providing information related to this outbreak. At least the media can be a source

of education as well as reassurance for MSME actors in running their business in the midst of a pandemic.

Communication, information, cooperation and coordination are the keys to successful disaster management, especially for handling victims and avoiding further risks. (HH, 2012) Furthermore, what needs to be done in disaster risk reduction is to manage communication aspects. For example, decision-making to coordinate handling of the community affected by the epidemic with the need for communication between the government, related institutions, and survivors, (Lestari, 2019) by developing models of intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication, public communication, mass communication, and communication cross-cultural issues related to disaster management.

As an agency specifically tasked with providing disaster management, the South Kalimantan BPBD is the government's right hand in providing information on handling and preventing new cases of the Omicron variant so that victims can be kept to a minimum. For less than 2 years during the pandemic, BPBD carried out disaster communication activities for the Covid-19 virus outbreak, in collaboration with the Regional Work Units (SKPD) and the Operations Control Center (Pusdalops) in providing education and information dissemination related to Covid-19. (RH, 2020)



Figure 1. Information on Covid-19 cases in the South Kalimantan region
 Source: South Kalimantan BPBD Instagram

This research was conducted in order to find out more about how the management of BPBD communication media in overcoming the impact of the omicron variant covid19

LITERATURE REVIEW

Disaster Communication

In essence, communication and disaster become an inseparable unit. In a disaster situation, communication becomes very important to keep going. The large number of potential spread of issues, hoaxes, and slander in disaster situations, makes communication a fortress to stabilize the emotional and mentality of disaster victims. Disaster communication studies are very important in order to reduce



disaster risk and increase the capacity of disaster-resilient communities. In dealing with disasters, we need social communication that involves many people. Communication can be a social radar, providing information related to events related to the social community, being an extension of the government's authority to inform or be aware of a disaster. (Lestari, 2018)

Communication in a disaster is not only needed in a disaster emergency, but is also important during and pre-disaster. As it is said that communication is the best way for successful disaster mitigation, preparation, response, and situation recovery in times of disaster. The ability to communicate messages about disasters to the public, government, media and opinion leaders can reduce the risks, save lives and impacts of disasters (Haddow and Haddow, 2008: xiv).

According to Haddow and Haddow (2008: 2) there are 5 main foundations in building effective disaster communication, namely:

1. Customer Focus, namely understanding what information is needed by customers in this case the community and volunteers. There must be a communication mechanism that ensures that information is conveyed correctly and accurately.
2. Leadership commitment, leaders who play a role in emergency response must have a commitment to effective communication and be actively involved in the communication process.
3. Situational awareness, effective communication is based on the controlled collection, analysis and dissemination of information related to disasters. Effective communication principles such as transparency and trustworthiness are key.
4. Media partnership, media such as television, newspapers, radio, and others are very important media to convey accurate information to the public. Cooperation with the media involves understanding the needs of the media with a team that is trained to work with the media to obtain information and disseminate it to the public.

Communication Media Management

Media management provides knowledge about media management using management principles with a complete management process, which includes various management functions, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, which is usually abbreviated as POAC function. These four management functions are always present in management practice, if one of them does not exist, then the management will not run according to its function. The four functions will be described as follows:

- a. Planning (planning) Planning is the initial foundation in media organizations. Because when a media is built, the owner must have planned the goals of the media and how the strategy is to achieve these goals.
- b. Organizing In media organizations, it is important that the business is placed in the labor division. Departments can be based on departments grouped by type of work. Each medium has different departments depending on the media's objectives, needs, resources and available environment. Such as small media and local reach with big media with national reach.
- c. Implementation (actuating) Implementation includes how managers provide direction and influence on individuals within the organization to carry out



obligations in accordance with their job exposure (Junaedi, 2017:44). Of course, implementation is important for achieving the goals as stated in the planning function. The vision, mission and goals of the organization will not be achieved if there is no implementation of the predetermined plan.

- d. Supervision (controlling) The last function is the supervisory function. However, supervision is not only carried out at the end of the management process. Basically, supervision has been carried out since the functions of planning, organizing and implementing. For this reason, since the planning function, the organization must have a vision, mission and goals that will become the basis for supervision.

South Kalimantan Regional Disaster Management Agency

South Kalimantan (Kalsel) is one of the provinces in Indonesia which is located on the island of Kalimantan. The capital city of South Kalimantan province is the city of Banjarmasin. This province is the home of the Banjarese ethnic group and has an area of 38,744.00 km² with a population in 2020 of 4,087,894 people, and the administrative area is divided into 11 regencies, 2 cities, 151 sub-districts, 142 urban villages, and 1,842 villages. (Official Website of South Kalimantan Province, n.d.)

Some areas of South Kalimantan in the rainy season become flooded areas, while in the dry season they become foggy areas with the intensity of forest fires occurring quite often. In addition to the threat of floods and forest and land fires, South Kalimantan also has other threats in the form of extreme weather, strong winds, as well as the threat of non-natural and social disasters such as social conflicts, technological failures, epidemics and disease outbreaks, building and residential fires. Given these disaster risks, the South Kalimantan Regional Disaster Management Agency was formed under the National Disaster Management Agency. Regional Disaster Management Agency is a non-departmental government agency that carries out disaster management tasks in both the Province and Regency/City areas by referring to the policies established by the National Disaster Management Agency.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research uses a qualitative approach, with the aim of trying to explain situations or events related to marketing communication strategies. The research was conducted by conducting observations, semi-structural interviews, and descriptive documentation review, namely the data collected later in the form of words, pictures or documentation, and not numbers. In addition, with qualitative methods, researchers can obtain in-depth data on how the BPBD disaster communication model is in handling the spread of the Omicron variant of Covid19 in South Kalimantan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of interviews conducted by researchers with the secretary of BPBD South Kalimantan, Mr. Iswantoro, that BPBD cooperates with various parties in the management of communication media management related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The researchers have organized these management steps based on the following points:



1. Planning
The South Kalimantan BPBD collaborates with the South Kalimantan Communications and Information Technology and the Covid-19 task force in managing information related to COVID-19, especially those related to health protocols in public spaces such as shops, markets and other businesses.
2. Organizing
Dividing tasks in each field to respond to the covid situation that occurred at that time. BPBD is coordinating with the South Kalimantan Government Regional Apparatus Work Unit (SKPD) together with other task force teams to accelerate Covid-19 service actions.
3. Actuating
The communication media is managed by the Kominfo of South Kalimantan province, where various incoming information will be released through the Kominfo news portal, daily reports, and social media institutions. Every Covid-19 data is informed twice every day through the Operations Control Center (Pusdalops) for Disaster Management using the Whats app group regarding the development of the number of cases.
4. Controlling
After the news release, it is possible that there will be a response from the public so that all forms of response or answers that are given depend on the field being addressed. For example, the community's response to working capital assistance during the COVID-19 period will be responded to by the rehabilitation and reconstruction sector in collaboration with the South Kalimantan COVID-19 handling group.

Simply put, according to Hasmawati (2018, 83) communication management is the role of management functions that are applied in communication. This makes management a driving force in carrying out communication to achieve the expected goals of the message to be conveyed. In this communication management the principles and functions of management are harmonized and there is a unification with communication, so as to produce a form of communication that is effective and reaches the intended target. For this reason, communication media management is needed so that BPBDs can distribute information in a targeted and appropriate manner. This is of course to control the level of panic that may occur in a society that is being hit by a global pandemic. The amount of information that is scattered and can be accessed from various platforms makes the public have the potential to get erroneous information.

Iswantoro said that the centralized distribution of information through Diskominfo is to prevent an overflow of confusing or uncontrolled news from various media, this also avoids the possibility of information inequality. Communication management in an agency or a company is considered as the key to managerial strategy, because of its role in selecting messages for agency purposes, various points of view, and then sending them to interested parties. Communicators as specialists from the domain, must be ready to handle complex communication actions, especially if it is associated with disaster situations where each community group feels the need to know information from various reliable sources.



Communication management resides within and between social systems. This shows that communication management is focused on the role of employees working in each sector whose various potentials are managerially enhanced to move the organization (Sahputra, 2020-155). By dividing tasks in each field to respond to the covid situation that occurs at certain times, South Kalimantan BPBD tries to be able to focus on certain topics so that they can be handled more intensely.

After several stages in distributing information related to the COVID-19 disaster, it is necessary to have control from related parties so that in presenting news, they must pay attention to the disaster journalism approach by prioritizing the empathy aspect, emphasizing information on the interests of citizens, presenting the community's needs for information that needs to be known about how to prepare and adapt. disaster, providing accurate and timely information, and there is no assumption in the delivery of information to avoid myths, rumors, panic and fear due to unclear information. (Asteria, 2016-10)

The role of media management has a strategic location in dealing with various problems that arise in human life. Good use of mass media, opens up more opportunities in terms of solving problems that arise. In fact, these problems are not just simple problems, but problems that arise and involve many people like the COVID-19 pandemic.

The distribution of communication carried out by an institution must be carried out properly, correctly, clearly, completely and without distortion, so that it can be fully understood by the people (partners) who are invited to communicate. Errors in communication made by institutions can not only harm morale, such as losing the trust of business partners (stakeholders), losing customers, losing opportunities, losing profits that have been calculated, and can even harm the image of the institution itself. That is why the South Kalimantan BPBD needs to pay attention to the steps taken in handling the current disaster situation.

CONCLUSION

BPBD cooperates with various parties in the management of communication media management related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The researchers have organized these management steps based on the following points: Planning, namely the South Kalimantan BPBD in collaboration with the South Kalimantan Communications and Information Technology and the Covid-19 task force in information management related to covid19. Then, Organizing is dividing the tasks in each field to respond to the covid situation. Furthermore, Actuating is a communication media that is managed in an integrated manner by the Ministry of Communication and Information of the South Kalimantan province. And the last one is Controlling, which is listening to the possibility of a response from the community so that all forms of response and answers that are given depend on the intended field.

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