COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IN PROVIDING INFORMATION ON TECHNICAL SERVICE FOR TESTING MOTORIZED VEHICLES AT CENTRAL ACEH TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the communication strategies utilized by employees of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh in disseminating technical information about the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (known as Uji KIR in Indonesia) to the public in Central Aceh Regency, while also identifying the obstacles that hinder their effectiveness in conveying the information. The employed data collection methods were interviews, literature studies, and observations. Furthermore, the obtained data were analyzed qualitatively. The research findings revealed that the communication strategy used by employees of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh in providing technical information on the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test was communication planning and management strategies. The Transportation Service of Central Aceh, particularly the head of the Workshop-and-Testing Division, undertakes a planning process that involves preparing and developing procedures for implementing the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, evaluating the test directly in case of issues, and strategizing to disseminate information through the government’s internal media. To provide information about the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, the Transportation Service of Central Aceh manages the implementation and preparation of a communication strategy that considers four factors: identifying the target audience, which includes owners of public transport vehicles; formulating messages to be conveyed to the vehicle owners; determining effective communication methods; and identifying the appropriate media for transmitting information to the vehicle owners. The purpose of communication planning and management strategies is to inform public transport vehicle owners about the procedure for taking the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test at the Transportation Service of Central Aceh.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a process that involves a communicator conveying stimuli to change the behavior of a communicant. Communication can take place either verbally or in written form. Effective communication requires a common understanding of the message being conveyed and feedback from the person receiving the message. Communication can still occur even when there is no common verbal language between the parties involved. This can be achieved through the use of non-verbal language.

To achieve a goal, it is essential to have a communication strategy that serves as a guide for communication planning and management. The communication strategy
should be designed in a way that is operationally practical and adaptable to different situations and conditions, to effectively achieve the set goal.

Improving communication among employees is crucial, and having a well-planned strategy is essential. A strategy refers to a comprehensive plan of action that outlines the implementation, planning, and execution of an activity within a specific timeframe. The presence of an effective organizational communication strategy implemented by the top management can significantly affect the level of employee motivation at work. It allows for a clear distinction between motivated and demotivated employees, which can ultimately impact the overall productivity and success of the organization.

To avoid any potential problems caused by errors in the organizational communication strategy, the higher management must plan and provide adequate work motivation to employees. This can help to ensure that employees are motivated to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively, leading to improved overall organizational performance. To ensure that the organization operates effectively, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the hierarchy of positions within the organization.

This includes the roles of leaders, leaders’ staff, and employees, each of whom has specific responsibilities in their respective areas of work. By establishing a clear and defined hierarchy, the organization can function efficiently and effectively.

The development of an organization largely depends on the leader’s ability to communicate effectively and the tools they use to facilitate communication. As such, the leader must fulfill their functions according to a well-thought-out plan. For this reason, to encourage employees to carry out their assigned tasks and provide information to the public about work procedures, policies, and instructions, clear communication is necessary. This will ensure that the information conveyed can be easily understood by the community, leading to the effective completion of tasks. Moreover, employees should also exchange information about the community’s needs regarding the procedure of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test.

Based on the Qanun No. 10/2010 regarding Regional Fees, individuals who own motorized vehicles are required to test their vehicles. This regulation is further supported by the Qanun No. 3/2016 which specifically regulates the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test. The Vehicle Roadworthiness Test in Central Aceh Regency follows a specific procedure outlined in the Qanun No. 10/2010 concerning Regional Fees.

In the first stage, vehicle owners register their vehicles. In the second stage, the cost of the test is determined. In the third stage, owners must complete the master book and the roadworthiness test book to obtain a roadworthiness test book for their vehicle. This process ensures that vehicles are roadworthy and safe for use on the road.

Providing clear and informative services related to the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test is crucial for ensuring that people understand and support government programs, particularly the transportation Service of Central Aceh. However, in reality, the communication strategy employed by the agency has not been successful in increasing public awareness and participation in the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test across Central Aceh. Many people still do not understand the testing procedures due to the ineffective and unequal distribution of the communication strategy. To communicate more effectively, service personnel must be able to identify their audience and adopt the appropriate approach to deal with them.

For this reason, this research aims to identify the communication strategies used by employees of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh to provide information on the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test to the people of Central Aceh Regency and the factors that hinder these strategies.

The concept of “communication” can be studied from both linguistic and terminological perspectives. In her book on
communication science, (roudhonah, 2007) explains that the term has roots in several Latin words, including “communicare” which means “to participate” or “to inform,” and “communis opinion” which refers to “public opinion”. Meanwhile, according to (Onong 2006), communication is the process of conveying messages from communicators to communicants through media that create certain effects. Another opinion is conveyed by (Mufid, 2005), that communication is the process of transferring information, ideas, emotions, skills, and others from one place to another by using symbols, such as words, pictures, and graphics, as well as through speech and writing, aiming at conveying and convincing.

A strategy is essentially a plan or management approach to achieve specific goals. However, a strategy should not only show the path to achieving those goals but also guide how to implement the operational tactics required to execute the strategy effectively.

A communication strategy is a crucial element of a plan, which is a product of thorough planning. In essence, planning is a fundamental aspect of the management function. A communication strategy is not only a roadmap that shows the way but also demonstrates how operational tactics can be implemented to achieve specific goals (Rosady, 2000; Ruslan, 2010).

The communication strategy is the optimal combination of various communication elements, such as communicators, messages, channels (media), receivers, and influences (effects), which are designed to achieve the desired communication goals (Middleton, 1980).

Fajar has stated that in developing a communication strategy, four factors must be taken into account: understanding the audience, formulating messages, determining methods, and selecting communication channels. The first step in creating effective communication is understanding the audience. It is important to keep in mind that in the communication process, the audience is not passive, but active (Edlina, 2022).

To develop an effective communication strategy, the next step after understanding the audience is to formulate a message by determining its theme and material. The key to influencing the audience with the message is to capture their attention. Attention refers to focused observation. Therefore, not everything that is observed can grab the audience’s attention.

The next step is to determine the delivery method, which can be approached from two aspects: the method of implementation and the content of the message. The selection of communication media is crucial to achieving the intended communication goals. This step requires combining one or multiple media depending on the objectives, messages, and techniques used. It is important to note that each medium has its respective strengths and weaknesses as a tool.

Customer service is a broad term that refers to any activity aimed at satisfying customers and fulfilling their desires and needs. According to (Kasmir, 2010), the primary goal of customer service is to provide satisfaction to customers.

Previous research found that the Transportation Service of Surakarta utilized the process of planning and managing as their communication strategies to disseminate the Electronic Vehicle Roadworthiness Test. Planning involved the Testing-and-Workshop Division holding meetings before implementing and updating the program to ensure smooth execution.

The communication strategy was managed in several steps. First, the target audience was identified, namely the owners of public transport vehicles. Second, messages were formulated for effective communication with the audience. Third, the appropriate method was selected. Finally, communication media were determined for sending information to the audience. The objective of this communication strategy was to encourage the owners of public transport vehicles to switch to the Electronic
Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (Ayun et al., 2022).

**METHOD**
This study was a type of qualitative research because it aimed to explain phenomena by collecting in-depth data with a focus on quality rather than quantity.

In addition, this study applied a descriptive approach to obtain a comprehensive description of written, spoken, and observed behaviors exhibited by individuals, groups, communities, or organizations. Moreover, the data collection methods utilized were tailored to the information or subject of the research (Moleong, 2018).

As stated by (Suharsimi, 2010, 2011), observation is a method of gathering information by directly investigating and examining various aspects of the subject being observed. Meanwhile, (Suardeyasasri, 2010) defines observation as a systematic and repeated examination of phenomena. The method of observation technique is a data collection approach used to observe and systematically record information directly or indirectly at the place of observation (Joesyiana, 2018; Suardeyasasri, 2010; Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, direct observation was conducted to analyze the communication strategy applied in the service of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test that the public requires.

Interviews were utilized in this study to gather information about the communication strategies utilized by employees when providing information. The respondents who participated in this study consisted of individuals who were taking the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, heads of divisions, and employees of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh.

The next step in the research process was data analysis, which involves several key stages: examining all available data, linking related pieces of information, reducing the amount of data to a manageable size, and presenting findings derived from interviews and observations.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test Provided by the Transportation Service of Central Aceh
For a company to grow and succeed, it needs to have a clear strategy in place. According to Hermawan (2012), a strategy can be defined as a series of well-planned actions that a company takes to achieve its desired objectives. Every company or institution has a vision and mission that guides its operations and objectives.

The testing process for ensuring the roadworthiness of public transport vehicles involves several stages. These stages are crucial for ensuring the safety and reliability of these vehicles. The stages include a pre-test, exhaust emission test, inspection of the underside of the vehicle, headlight intensity test, front-wheel inflator test, scales test, brake test, and speedometer test. The administrative process for these stages is carried out through an application. The success of the program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (known as Uji KIR in Indonesia) is measured by the number of vehicles undergoing tests at the Transportation Service of Central Aceh.

The submission to take this test helps to increase the effectiveness of the community’s mobility and the Transportation Service’s ability to provide quality services to the public. If a vehicle is due for roadworthiness testing, its owner can register and pay the testing fee via the bank. Once registered and the fee is paid, the owner will receive a scheduled testing time according to the agreed-upon date.

The program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test has been set to be transformed into an electronic system, to improve the quality of service provided to the public. This information was disclosed by Taufiqurrahman, the Head of the Vehicle Testing Division: “Efforts have been made to transform this program (Note: The Vehicle Roadworthiness Test) into an electronic system since 2017. Unfortunately, due to the limited budget of the government
of Central Aceh, immediate implementation was not possible.

Several stages needed to be perfected to ensure optimal implementation of the program. At present, the program has undergone refinement, although initial deficiencies existed due to the need for funding from a third party. As a result, immediate functionality as a fully operational system was not achievable. However, I am confident that with further development towards digitization, this program has great potential for success.”

The statement was reinforced by a confirmation from Ikbal, who is the Head of the Subdivision. He said that “The program had been launched a long time ago before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is affiliated with the Transportation Service of Central Aceh, and currently, testing is still being conducted manually rather than electronically. There is a possibility that the electronic system will be implemented only in the next year.”

Improving the application is a time-consuming process, and budget constraints often limit progress. As a result, programs that need to be optimized for the future may experience delays as deficiencies in the application are addressed, sometimes taking several years to complete. Ilham, the Head of the IT Division, has confirmed that there are currently no plans to switch to an electronic system.

He said that “When faced with technical problems, we reach out to IT developers from Banda Aceh who have effectively resolved the issues. While we have no local team responsible for technical issues, we rely on the Banda Aceh team’s services to resolve these issues as they have the authority to carry out repairs under our supervision. Consequently, we continue to use the old testing method.”

The program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test is designed to provide segmented services to owners of public transport vehicles who require routine vehicle roadworthiness testing. Taufiqurrahman, the Head of the Vehicle Testing Division, has revealed that: “This program is primarily targeted towards public transport vehicle owners in Central Aceh, including the city of Takengon. In Takengon, there are several public transport vehicles operating, such as L300, Sanura, PMTOH, and private-public transport vehicles.”

The statement above was supported by Ikbal, the Head of the Motorized Vehicle Testing Subdivision, who stated that: “The owners of public transport vehicles (in Indonesia, this kind of vehicles is classified as Kendaraan Bermotor Wajib Uji [KBWU] or vehicles required to undergo safety inspection) must take the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test if their vehicles are domiciled in Central Aceh. The owner’s domicile is not a determining factor as long as the vehicle’s license plate number is BL G.”

The Vehicle Roadworthiness Test serves the purpose of ensuring that public transport vehicles are in good condition for use. The Transportation Service of Central Aceh provides outreach services to the community to educate public transport owners about the testing process and to remind them about the applicable rules. Anwar, a bus owner, attested to the usefulness of these services. He shared that: “After I arrive to have my vehicle tested, the employees of the Transportation Service explain everything that needs to be prepared beforehand, which helps me avoid unnecessary trips. This has been very helpful for me. Additionally, they inform me of the schedule for the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test and any applicable rules that I need to follow.”

Based on the explanations above, the program of Vehicle Roadworthiness Test is a regional service that aims to support the development of smart cities in Central Aceh by providing vehicle testing services that are friendly to the public. The Transportation Service of Central Aceh strives to implement every program set by the regional government and its work programs.

This statement was strengthened by Taufiqurrahman, the Head of the Vehicle Testing Division, who stated: “Since every Vehicle Roadworthiness Test applicant comes automatically every six months, our
socialization efforts have been sufficient. I believe that it has been one year, so these people have come here at least twice. During the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, we also provide socialization. If someone claims that we have not conducted any socialization, it is not true. We have been conducting socialization for one year now, so all of our targets have been met.”

The communication strategy is a crucial tactic to achieve desired goals. Every institution, agency, and organization has various programs that are planned to accomplish their goals. The Transportation Service of Central Aceh has a program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test that has been prearranged. Therefore, the communication efforts to promote this program must be accurate and prompt in reaching the community. Communication strategy combines communication planning and communication management to achieve a specific goal.

The Transportation Service of Central Aceh implements the program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test (known as Uji KIR in Indonesia) through the Workshop-and-Testing Division to reduce bureaucratic complexity and fulfill the division’s duties and functions. They employ a one-way communication system using multiple media to inform applicants and provide services for the program. Aldi Ridho Akbar, a motorized-vehicle testing officer, states: “We provide information to applicants of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test through pamphlets, brochures, and large banners. However, we do not use social media because the program is only intended for owners of vehicles required to undergo safety inspection (known as Kendaraan Bermotor Wajib Uji [KBWU] in Indonesia) in Central Aceh, which means that not all members of the community are affected.”

The use of traditional media is considered sufficient in providing information to owners of public transport vehicles so the use of social media is not necessary. Furthermore, the website of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh also reported on the service of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test through a press release titled “Layanan Uji KIR yang Lebih Efisien dan Sesuai dengan Peraturan Lalu Lintas” (English: The Vehicle Roadworthiness Test Becoming More Efficient and Complying with Traffic Regulations). This statement is consistent with what Ikbal, the Head of the Vehicle Testing Subdivision, said: “As part of our service, we always provide information to our customers by using pamphlets, brochures, and notifications before they ask. Here, our customers are vehicle owners undergoing the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test. This is because our customer segmentation is only owners of public transport vehicles.” This is in line with Munir Ahmad’s statement as a bus owner, who mentioned that “The service we receive is good, as there have been no significant changes from the previous year. The administrative process is straightforward as the officers are friendly and ask us directly, provided that we follow the proper procedures, which makes everything hassle-free.”

In the communication process, response or feedback can be divided into two categories: a. Immediate feedback: This type of feedback occurs in face-to-face communication where the communicator and the communicant are present, allowing the feedback to be received instantly. The feedback in this case is immediate and can be a direct response to what the communicator has conveyed(Zikri Fachrul Nurhadi, 2017, p. 21) b. Delayed feedback: This type of feedback occurs in media communication, such as print or electronic media like newspapers, radio, television, films, and others. The communicator may receive the feedback after the communication is completed, and sometimes it can take several days. The feedback in this case is indirect and delayed (Zikri Fachrul Nurhadi, 2017)

Based on the statements above, it can be inferred that the role of social communication can be identified from the communication model used during the communication process. This also affects the response or feedback from the communication model being used. The response can be immediate from the communicant or take a few days after the
message is delivered. Hence, effective and persuasive communication is crucial to ensure that the message is easily understood and comprehended by the communicant.

The Process of Socializing the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test Conducted by the Transportation Service of Central Aceh

The progress and development of technology necessitate the Transportation Service of Central Aceh to utilize social media for disseminating information and providing services to the community to prevent any violations. Such information can be delivered through various media platforms, including online and everyday media. The use of social media by the Transportation Service of Central Aceh is not as significant and structured as on its official regional government’s media. However, through the content that has been published, they hope to effectively communicate with the public. The brochure on vehicle roadworthiness testing provides a clear and comprehensive guide on the process of obtaining the test. It includes information on the registration process as well as payment options through banks or ATMs. The employees of the Transportation Service distribute brochures to individuals who undergo vehicle testing to help them clearly understand the process of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test.

As the Transportation Service of Central Aceh faces communication obstacles that are common in the process, it is important to conduct evaluations that can help identify mistakes and areas for improvement.

The communication process can originate internally or externally from an institution. Internally, the Transportation Service of Central Aceh faces a significant obstacle with the audiences undergoing the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test. It is as explained by Aldi Ridho Akbar: “To address obstacles related to the services of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, we immediately pass the information on to the superiors so that we can sort things out. When we face problems related to people who do not understand the submission procedure of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, we will explain it to them directly. The obstacles that occurred were not significant and only related to minor administration and other matters.”

To ensure that the service process runs smoothly and efficiently, it is important to resolve any problems that may arise. Failure to do so can result in delays and slower processing times, which can negatively impact the overall program. Therefore, it is crucial for the Transportation Service of Central Aceh to proactively identify and address any issues that may occur to guarantee that the program runs effectively.

Communication obstacles are common occurrences when communicating, particularly when communicating without knowing the audience’s background. These obstacles can arise from within or outside the institution. The success of communication depends on the ability of the communicator to reach the intended target. If the communicator does not pay attention to the message being conveyed, barriers can arise, both from within and outside the communication process. Therefore, the communicator needs to understand and focus on the intended target to ensure effective communication.

A communication strategy is an essential plan to achieve a desired goal. Every company or institution has various programs planned to accomplish its objectives. In this study, the Transportation Service of Central Aceh provides the program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test that has been coveted since the establishment of transportation services. Therefore, it is crucial to communicate this program accurately and efficiently to reach the community as soon as possible.

Communication strategy is the integration of communication planning and management to achieve a specific goal (Effendy, 2003). The planning of the program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test is conducted to ensure its proper execution and enable the community to utilize the test managed by the Transportation Service of Central Aceh. The necessity of this program arises from the
problem of people neglecting their safety while using public transportation. For this reason, the government through Law No. 22/2009 concerning Road Traffic and Transportation Article 53 requires that public passenger cars, buses, freight cars, trailers, and road-operated patch trains must undergo the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test. The communication planning involved in this program should focus on creating effective communication strategies in a simple framework.

The utilization of information and communication technology can assist the government in improving its performance and providing better services to the public. To achieve this, guidelines for implementing E-Government are needed that can be applied by all regional apparatuses so that the use of this technology can be useful and effective.

The Transportation Service of Central Aceh formulates a work plan every five years. The program for 2016-2021 is an update and evaluation of the 2011-2015 work plan (Renja, 2020). The Vehicle Roadworthiness Test is part of the work plan of both the Transportation Service and the Government of Central Aceh. It was planned in 2021, before the COVID-19 pandemic. The head of the Workshop-and-Testing Division of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh is responsible for socializing this program and ensuring that it is integrated into the work plan.

The objective of the Government and the Transportation Service of Central Aceh in constructing this program is to minimize corrupt practices that frequently occur during manual vehicle roadworthiness testing. The Workshop-and-Testing Division of the Transportation Service of Central Aceh is solely responsible for planning and implementing all programs and information regarding the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, without any interference from other divisions. Although the Head of the Transportation Service knows and approves the program’s implementation, the Workshop-and-Testing Division bears all the responsibility for the entire process, including planning, development, socialization, and testing of the vehicles. The following are several points used in disseminating information about the program of the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test:


b. Disseminating information about the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test through pamphlets and billboards.

c. Conducting persuasion to encourage public transport vehicle owners to test their vehicles.

d. Explaining the vehicle testing process to public transport vehicle owners.

The Transportation Service of Central Aceh uses communication planning to guide decision-making in the formulation of strategic policies and programs. Planning is essential for achieving an organization’s vision and mission. A communication plan ensures that program implementation is systematic and follows established guidelines.

CONCLUSIONS

The Transportation Service of Central Aceh, particularly the head of the Workshop-and-Testing Division, undertakes a planning process that involves preparing and developing procedures for implementing the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, evaluating the test directly in case of issues, and strategizing to disseminate information through the government’s internal media. To provide information about the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test, the Transportation Agency of Central Aceh manages the implementation and preparation of a communication strategy that considers four factors: identifying the target audience, which includes owners of public transport vehicles; formulating messages to be conveyed to the vehicle owners; determining effective communication methods; and identifying the appropriate media for transmitting information to the vehicle owners. The purpose of communication planning and management strategies is to inform public transport vehicle owners about the procedure for taking the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test at the Transportation
Service of Central Aceh. The conclusion is that the communication strategy applied by employees of the Transportation Service in providing information about the Vehicle Roadworthiness Test to the people of Central Aceh Regency has been effective. This is achieved through a process of planning the services and providing excellent information.

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