

ABSTRACT

The differing characteristics of public universities (PTN) and private universities (PTS) shape distinct approaches to managing sustainability communication, influenced by each institution's orientation in delivering messages. This study aims to analyze public relations strategies in sustainability communication at two universities, encompassing the rationale for strategy selection, implementation processes, and the challenges encountered along with their solutions. The research employs a qualitative approach with a constructivist paradigm and a comparative case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis, and were examined using The Nine Steps of Strategic PR (Smith, 2020) and the elements of sustainability communication (Ardiyanto, 2023). The findings indicate that strategies are shaped by institutional vision, audience mapping, and stakeholder orientation. This study produces a general framework for sustainability communication PR strategies in higher education, consisting of: (1) determining message objectives aligned with the institutional framework; (2) planning messages through environmental assessment, internal–external audience mapping, and organizational needs; (3) disseminating messages through media selection and the utilization of communication actors; and (4) evaluating audience responses, message effectiveness, and institutional recognition. This framework is expected to serve as a practical and adaptive reference for higher education institutions in Indonesia.

Keywords: communication strategy; higher education; public relations; sustainability; sustainability communication