

## **The Public Relation Strategies Of Blitar Regency Diskominfo For The Smart City Program**

**Fandi Avisa Baihaqi Zein**

Darussalam Gontor University  
fandiavistabaihaqi93@gmail.com

**Bambang Setyo Utomo**

Darussalam Gontor University  
bambang@unida.gontor.ac.id

### **Abstract**

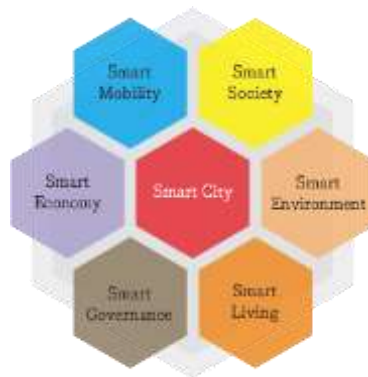
This study aims to analyze the public relations strategies of the Blitar Regency Communication and Informatics Office (DISKOMINFO) in socializing the Smart City Program. It addresses the limited academic focus on PR strategies in PR strategies in non-metropolitan contexts, particularly in the implementation of smart program initiatives. Using a qualitative case study method, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The findings were categorized based on Ruslan's five strategies: operational, persuasive-educative, social responsibility, collaborative, and coordinative-integrative. Each strategy was implemented adaptively to align with local conditions, promote public awareness, and build institutional collaboration. The results show that operational and persuasive approaches were dominant, while collaboration efforts required better implementation. This research contributes to understanding how local governments could effectively apply strategic communication to support digital transformation programs.

*Keyword: Blitar Regency, DISKOMINFO, Public Relations, Smart City Program, Socialization.*

### **Introduction**

The digital era has brought significant changes through the development of information and communication technology (ICT), transforming human interaction and fostering innovation. According to

Francois Lyotard, the rise of postmodern society, now evolving into a Digital Society, stems from ICT advancements and the data revolution (Lubis 2017). Humans are encouraged to create information technology that helps their work and provided motivation to evolve and develop into smart people (Linjani 2018). Recognizing this, governments are prioritizing ICT to improve public services, resulting in rapid program and innovation development across Indonesian cities. A key concept emerging from this shift is the smart city, which integrates ICT and the Internet of Things (IoT) into governance and daily life. This approach aims to optimize services, increase efficiency, and foster citizen prosperity. By leveraging technology, smart cities represent a transformative step toward creating sustainable, connected, and prosperous urban environments, aligning with the vision of a digitally advanced society. (Wahid and Amalia 2020)



**Figure 1. 6 Pillars of Smart City**

A Smart City was a big concept of building innovative areas through six essential pillars: smart governance, smart branding, smart economy, smart living, smart society, and smart environment, which is launched by the Ministry of Communication and Information as a manifestation of the program "Movement towards 100 Smart Cities in Indonesia" in 2017. This program is presented as a concept of developing a region by implementing information and communication technology (ICT) and the Internet of Things (IoT) in an innovative, effective, and efficient way by connecting physical, economic, and social infrastructure in an area, as an effort to optimize the resources and existing potential and provide ease of service to create the definition of a smart nation which referred to the six essential pillars in it. (Muhammad Syarif Hartawan, Arman Syah Putra, and Ayub Muktiono 2020). As part of this national initiative, The Blitar Regency was

among the first 50 regions selected to participate, formalizing its commitment through Regent Decree No. 188/249/409.06/2018.

Despite growing government interest in developing a region through a smart city program, most existing literature emphasizes only technological and infrastructure development, overlooking the strategic role of public relations (PR) and its essential functions to public understanding and participation. This gap is especially pronounced in non-metropolitan regions such as Blitar Regency, where digital readiness, public participation, and government resources differ significantly from those of urban cities.

Through the points, this research investigates the PR strategies implemented by the Blitar Regency Communication and Informatics Office (DISKOMINFO) in socializing the Smart City Program, focusing on how PR approaches shape society engagement and program implementation. While to examine the results, this research adopts Ruslan's Public Relations Strategy Theory, which comprises five core approaches: operational, persuasive-educative, social responsibility, collaborative, and coordinative-integrative. (Ruslan 2017)

The PR's Role in this context is crucial in shaping public awareness, perception, and engagement, particularly in initiatives requiring behavior and mindset transformation. (Widodo and Permatasari 2020) suggest that PR presents behavioral and cognitive transformation through targeted socialization efforts. In regions undergoing digital governance reforms, effective PR strategies are essential to disseminating information and introducing programs from the vision and mission to their goals and contributing to building images and maintaining great relations.

Within this framework, this research seeks to answer the following question: "How do the PR Strategies of the Blitar District Communication and Informatics Office socialize the Smart City Program?". Methodologically, the research employs a qualitative case study design, incorporating semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and participant observation methods to reveal the patterns and impacts of PR strategies in its implementation practice. The findings are expected to theoretically contribute by expanding the academic insights into localized PR practices in digital governance and to practically contribute by assisting in socializing the Smart City program to the public and finding obstacles based on the PR operational strategy theory.

## **Research Method**

The researcher chose the qualitative case study design to describe the actual conditions in more detail with relatively less samples, to be more focused than quantitative research, and to provide a complete and in-depth description of the subject under study, including several characteristics, namely; particularistic, descriptive, heuristics, and inductive.

The selection of DISKOMINFO Blitar Regency as the research site was purposive, based on its primary role in implementing the smart city initiative, as stipulated in Regent Regulation No. 77 of 2019 on the Position, Organizational Structure, Duties, Functions, and Work Procedures of the Communication and Information Office of Blitar Regency. The fieldwork was conducted over two weeks. While this timeframe provided focused insight into government dynamics, it also presented temporal limitations, particularly regarding long-term strategy evaluation.

Data were collected using three primary techniques: participant observation method, semi-structured interview, and document analysis (including relevant books, regulations, activity reports and documentary photos). Observations focused on public relations practices, public engagement activities, and inter-departmental coordination which conducted in two steps over two weeks. Analyzing weaknesses to ensure the readiness and feasibility of the program in the first week, then improving the functions of all stakeholders with coordination meeting in the second week.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight key informants, including the Head of the Blitar Regency DISKOMINFO Office, the Head of Application and Informatics of DISKOMINFO Blitar Regency, the News Analyst and Public Relations Officer, and several Regional Government Organizations of Blitar Regency directly involved in the Smart City Program. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their roles, expertise, and active involvement in both planning and implementing the Smart City Program. The sample size was deemed sufficient based on data saturation, where no new findings emerged after the eighth interview.

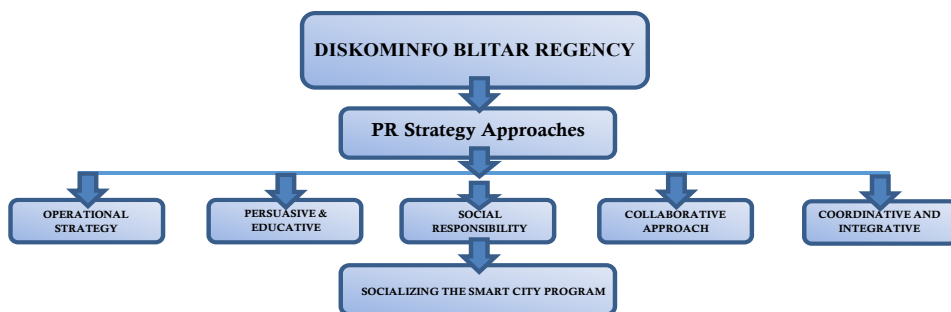
The document analysis involved reviewing institutional and regulatory materials, including The Blitar Regency Smart City Master Plan, Blitar Regent Decree No. 188/249/409.06/KTPS/2018 on the Smart City Implementation Team, Blitar Regency in Figures 2018, Internal PR activity reports, and Photographic documentation from Smart City-related events and campaigns.

To ensure the data validity and reliability, both source triangulation and technical triangulation were applied. The data from interviews were

cross-checked with observational findings and government documents. For example, the operational strategies mentioned in interviews were compared with actual program documentation and government files during the observation field. Discrepancies were noted, coded, and reconciled through informants via checking where necessary.

Data analysis was conducted through three activity processes: reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. First, relevant data was simplifying and classifying rough data into specific, more superficial categories that were easy to understand. Second, data was developed and presented into thematic categories that reflect strategic approaches to smart city communication. All data were collected in one, so it was easy to conclude. Finally, conclusions were drawn to answer the central inquiry of the study by rethinking the writing, viewing and reconfirming field data, and reviewing it by inviting colleagues to provide ideas or exchange ideas. No software tools were used; manual coding was applied to maintain a direct interpretive approach.

Ethical considerations were carefully noticed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all elements prior to interviews, and confidentiality of internal information was maintained. The study was conducted using accepted ethical standards for qualitative research. The research focused on a single institution and region. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other contexts. Nonetheless, the study significantly contributes to understanding public relations strategies in Socializing the Smart City Program.



**Figure 2.** Research Framework

## Results and Discussion

The researcher made a description of the results of research on the public relations strategies used by the Communication and Informatics Office (DISKOMINFO) of Blitar Regency in socializing the Smart City Program. The analysis is structured according to the five public relations

strategy models proposed by Ruslan (2006): operational, persuasive-educative, social responsibility, collaborative, and coordinative-integrative approaches. Data was collected and presented in the form of paragraph descriptions and conclusions were drawn from these descriptions in the following stages:

### **The Operational Strategy**

The DISKOMINFO Blitar Regency determines and designs general policies, targets, and goal patterns through operational strategies. The researcher found that the government applies an approach by structuring its planning process into four stages to increase the effectiveness of the program's socialization: opportunity and problem identification, master plan development, program implementation, and evaluation. These approaches ensure that the smart city program is aligned with regional readiness and local needs.

As stated by Eko Susanto, Head of the Communication and Informatics Office (DISKOMINFO) of Blitar Regency, the strategy began with a diagnostic stage:

“Through the problem identification stage, **we (the government) must continue to monitor and pay close attention** to this; "What are its weaknesses, and what can show its effectiveness?" From the results of the field analysis obtained, we (the government) can find out how much potential the region has, or how ready the region was to receive the smart plans or programs (including the regional potential, and human resources owned). In addition, we will report all existing programs to the central government to evaluate the implementation of the KEMENKOMINFO smart city program. The evaluation process is a step to determine how big and to what extent the results obtained from a program are carried out together with all relevant Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) divided into several categories: baseline, output, outcome, impact and quick wins.”(Susanto 2023)

These steps reflect Ruslan’s concept of operational strategy, which emphasizes planned, adaptive communication, and responsiveness to public opinion and social dynamics.



**Figure 3.** Observation Field by DISKOMINFO Blitar Regency  
*Source: DISKOMINFO Blitar Regency Documentation*

These observation results show that the DISKOMINFO of Blitar Regency directly inspected the field to determine an area's conditions and problems in more detail. The results of this field review determine what programs are appropriate and feasible to plan and socialize with regional communities so that the program implemented later will be focused precisely on the needs and readiness of the area in receiving program socialization.

These result findings were similar to research conducted by (Akbar 2018) regarding DISHUB's public relations strategy in PERDA's socialization that the government identified problems through several stages: Initial research describing the problem, collecting data and information, finally processing the data and preparing a program plan.

The government's planning also included coordination meetings with other departments and outreach initiatives to several institutions to optimize the program socialization. As stated by Asyik Fauzi;

**“.....then, we held a coordination meeting with various parties, including the Head of Department, and carried out initial outreach with several other departments to make it easier for us to socialize this smart society program. "After a decision emerges from the meeting, it will immediately be introduced to the socialization process to all schools (educational institutions) in Blitar Regency and mediation through official and government social media....” (Fauzi 2023)**



**Figure 4.** Smart City Program Planning Coordination Meeting  
*Source: Smart City Forum*

The researcher's interview results were strengthened by observations that DISKOMINFO held a coordination meeting with several internal (Division Heads) and external (Department Heads) publics to formulate a draft road map for the Blitar Regency smart regency master plan. In addition, the master plan documentation above strengthens the results, which show the regional readiness and the quality of existing human resources.

The coordination meeting's aim was to increase the role and function of all stakeholders in implementing Smart Regency development programs so that every program in each dimension could be socialized and implemented flawlessly. One of the results of the coordination meeting that was previously held is the BLITAR DISTRICT SMART REGENCY MASTERPLAN Book "Analysis of Blitar Regency Development Strategy for 2019-2028."



**Figure 5.** Documentation of Master Plan Blitar Regency  
*Source: DISKOMINFO Documents*



The third operational approach, DISKOMINFO, including The Blitar Regency Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD), conducted several training sessions and field technical guidance to provide basic training in improving the quality and readiness of an area in receiving smart programs. The government presents professional workers following its pillars to educate and increase public interest in the planned smart city program, such as the ADI EXPORT program on the smart economy pillar by the Department of Industry and Trade (DISPERINDAG).



**Figure 6.** Intensive Training and Technical Guidance

*Source: DISKOMINFO Documentation*

This research point was strengthened by Sri Supartiningsih's statement as Head of Blitar Regency Market Management and Development Division :

“....Among the programs we designed are the financial transaction ecosystem (less-cash society) and ADI EXPORT. And to make it easier for us (DISPERINDAG) to introduce the program, we carry out several introductions and intensive training to the community on how to manage existing resources which could be exported to increase the reach of district products and open up market space.”

The researcher's findings above were in line with the statement conveyed by Ma'ruf Abdullah in his book "Employee Performance Management and Evaluation" that implementation is a series of follow-up processes to an established program or policy, consisting of decision-making and strategic and operational steps to achieve targets. (Akbar 2018)

The final stage of the operational strategy carried out by the Blitar Regency Communication and Information Service (DISKOMINFO) prepared a smart city evaluation form sheet to find out how significant and to what extent the previously planned programs were successfully implemented according to their respective pillars, which consists of several program assessment indicators, namely including a fixed reference point

(Baseline), program results (Output), program benefits (Outcome), influence of the program (Impact), and initiative steps taken (Quick Wins).



**Picture 7.** Field Review Meeting and Smart City Evaluation Sheet  
*Source: Smart City Forum*

The evaluation sheet results would be reported to The Ministry of Communication and Information (KEMENKOMINFO) as part of the reporting on implementing the smart city program in the Blitar Regency. It measures several things, such as baseline, outputs, outcomes, impacts, and quick wins. As stated by Eko Susanto;

“...In the end, we will report all existing programs to the central government to evaluate the implementation of the KEMENKOMINFO smart city program. The evaluation process is a step to determine how big and to what extent the results obtained from a program are carried out together with all relevant Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) divided into several categories: baseline, output, outcome, impact and quick wins.” (Susanto 2023)

These results suggest that the strategies for socializing the smart city program in Blitar Regency are carried out carefully and gradually by identifying the problems and opportunities, planning the master plan, implementing the program, and evaluating the stages.

### **Persuasive and Educative Approach**

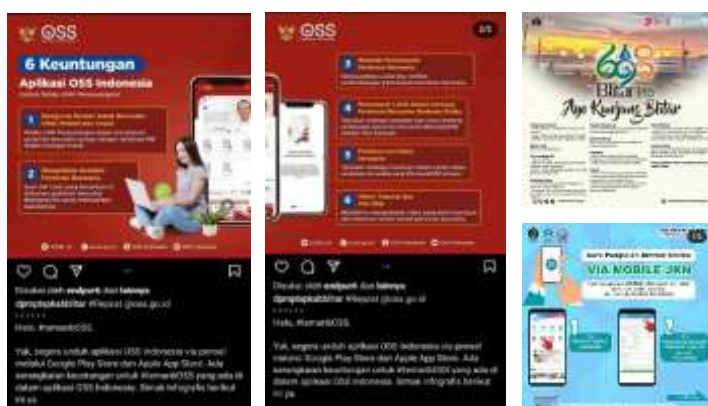
As the next strategy, the Blitar Regency Communication and Information Office (DISKOMINFO) used several strategic approaches to influence and educate the community in increasing the effectiveness of the socialization of the smart city program being implemented.

The approaches begin with planning and determining the message. Then, in its implementation, the government persuades and educates the public by providing educational and persuasive messages through outreach

programs, utilizing several communication media, such as social media (Instagram) and printed media (posters). As stated by Eko Susanto;

“.....we (the regional government) together with the OPD at each pillar, **determine and formulate the persuasive message** that will be conveyed, of course so that **the message is more convincing and could be well received** by the community.” (Susanto 2023)

This approach aligns with Ruslan's concept of persuasive and educative strategies, highlighting the importance of two-way communication to generate awareness and behavioral change. In addition, to optimize its effectiveness, DISKOMINFO adopted multiple communication media, including social media (Instagram) and print media (banners and posters), to educate and persuade the program.



**Figure 8.** Documentation of Persuasive and Educational Posts  
*Source: instagram @blitar\_landofkings @rsudwlingi @dpmtspkabblitar*

The statement was strengthened by documentary evidence that the researcher obtained from DISKOMINFO and OPD's Instagram social media. The documentation above explained that in socializing the program, DISKOMINFO and several Blitar Regency Regional Apparatus Organizations utilized Instagram communication media to persuade the district society to utilize the application services "VIA MOBILE JKN" prepared by the regional government. It also included educational messages that provide understanding to the people of the Blitar district about the benefits of using the OSS (online single submission) application.

While this strategy succeeded in broadening outreach, the research has the limitation to measure the level of message retention or engagement analytics on social platforms.

## Social Responsibility Approach

This strategy centers on fostering public trust by showing mutual benefits. Internally, DISKOMINFO Blitar Regency conducts direct monitoring and evaluation meetings of the program's implementation; externally, it partners with OPDs on the empowerment and maintenance of environmental quality through the smart city program. As stated by the Head of the Communication and Informatics Office (DISKOMINFO) of Blitar Regency;

“.....By direct supervising, then **guiding in the field** was one of the ways we can approach social responsibility and make them aware that this program is for the common good, not because of personal desires or one-sided desires. **We also regularly hold program evaluation meetings**, because this is where suggestions and input emerge.., in other way we build synergy with quality activities and programs so that they feel this benefits them. **We also present massive programs** useful for the community, such as “*Bank Sampah*”, OPAC, and the “*Gerakan Menanam Pohon*”. All of these programs run directly involving all elements of society.” (Susanto 2023)

This dual approach aligns with Ruslan’s framework that a PR must cultivate an attitude of social responsibility, building confidence and creating mutual benefits. Compared to corporate CSR models, which are often profit mindset, this approach takes a grassroots orientation by embedding society welfare into policy execution.



**Figure 9.** Documentation of External Social Responsibility Approach

*Source: DISKOMINFO & DLH Blitar Regency*

Based on the researcher’s findings in the field, the Communication and Informatics Office (DISKOMINFO) took a social responsibility approach to the organization's internal and external public, such as maintaining and improving the Environment's quality by implementing the smart programs with the DLH Blitar Regency (waste bank program, Tsunami Disaster

Responsible Village (DESTANA) program, and the "Let's Plant" Movement program).

### **Collaborative Approach**

In implementing the smart city program, DISKOMINFO established internal collaborative relationships with several related fields within the organizational structure, such as the Public Information and Communication Sector and the Application and Informatics Sector. Likewise, with external organizations, the government built collaboration with several district OPDs, educational institutions, and business workers within Blitar Regency and outside the district.

“We certainly have a lot of collaboration between internal and external parties. Internally, we will definitely synergize with all the division here (DISKOMINFO), then, it will be seen where and with whom we have to work together externally, **synergize to build and make this program a success**. Of course, to maximize the program results to be achieved and the sustainability of program implementation in the future.” (Susanto 2023)

This reflects Ruslan’s collaborative approach, which is that the PR Blitar Regency take a cooperative approach to build compatible relationships both inward and externally to get community support and obtain public opinion for both parties. However, the study found limited documentation or monitoring ways to assess the depth or sustainability of these collaborations.



**Figure 10.** Documentation of External Collaboration Approach  
*Source: DISKOMINFO & UNISBA*

By this way, the Communication and Informatics Office of Blitar Regency established the collaboration to build intimacy and synergy with the University of Blitar in supporting and succeeding university events with their students' college.

Conversely, the researcher found a different case in "Public Relations Management Strategy in Building External Collaboration in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Malang City"(Najah 2021). The institution implemented several approaches to build external cooperation, including setting the program's goal and external public targets, coordinating the organizational management, updating organizational information, creating MoUs, and holding regular meetings and reporting work results.

### **Coordinative and Integrative Approach**

DISKOMINFO used these approaches to ensure synchronization across government units and integrate the district's vision and mission with the socialized program. Coordination meetings are held regularly, targeting sectors where smart programs could be implemented in several issues. As stated by Eko Susanto;

“We already have a coordination concept. **We collaborate with all aspects of the components of society** that can be invited to work together, in order to create a faster smart city ecosystem. Such as a coordinating approach with the Regional Government, the OPD Community, and internal communities in the service, **for example: Blitar Regency is the second largest region in terms of rice and egg production**, so we have to be smart in **exploring potential and looking for markets for the community**, such as: Tasikmalaya Regional Government, Jakarta, Surabaya, Lamongan, to NTB and Gorontalo. Because if there is no mature coordination and cooperation, inflation or shortages of goods could occur.” (Susanto 2023)

As the second largest rice and egg-producing district, DISKOMINFO of Blitar Regency took a coordinated approach to analyze the potential market for exploiting the district's resources, avoiding an inflation crisis or shortages of goods. In this way, the government coordinated and collaborated with several regional governments (Tasikmalaya, Jakarta, Surabaya, Lamongan, NTB, and Gorontalo) to create a faster smart city ecosystem.

The institution also took an integrative approach to integrate the objectives of implementing the smart city program with the vision and mission of Blitar Regency's five bhakti. In line with Ruslan (2006) and Mutma'inah (2017), this strategy reflects the integration of program goals with the district's broader development mission. As stated by Asyik Fauzi;

“The program designed was the result of the implementation of the district's vision and mission, one of which is found in the second



point", improving people's standard of living by **optimizing the potential of the younger generation.**" (Fauzi 2023)

A similar case was conveyed by Agus Muntalip Setiawan, as The Head of Culture at the Blitar Regency Culture and Tourism Service (DISBUDPAR);

“"We have a mission to **"improve social welfare with local cultural wisdom,"** and if I am not mistaken in the last point in the Regency Pancha Bakti, we also mentioned **the "Charm of Blitar Raya."** This is our benchmark in moving forward and moving.".” (Muntalip 2023)

Unlike many other regional efforts, Blitar's integrative model incorporates social, economic, and environmental dimensions to optimize existing resources and improve the welfare and economic level of the community through smart city programs based on the district's vision, mission, and five bhakti of the Blitar District Government. This strategic alignment demonstrates how PR can serve as a bridging function between policy goals and citizen engagement, reinforcing Ruslan's approaches,

**Table 1.** Result of the research

No.	The PR Operational Strategy Approach	Implementation
1	<b>The Operational Strategy</b>	<p><b>Identifies regional problems and opportunities;</b> to describe the weaknesses of the area owned and to know more about the opportunities of the potential of the area that can be developed through several smart city programs</p> <p><b>The planning of the smart regency master plan and road map;</b> managing regional development and development programs from the results of the field analysis obtained before.</p> <p><b>Intensive training and technical guidance</b> on the implementation and application of program design in accordance with the smart city pillar with Blitar District OPD.</p> <p><b>Evaluation of program implementation</b> to find out how much and to what extent the</p>

No.	The PR Operational Strategy Approach	Implementation
2	<b>Persuasive and Educational Approaches</b>	<p>program was successfully disseminated, referring to 5 assessment indicators, namely; fixed reference points, program results, program benefits, program influence or impact, and initiative steps.</p> <p><b>Planning and determining the message of program socialization;</b> to formulate or plan the message to be delivered during the implementation of the program</p> <p><b>Utilizing communication media for program socialization;</b> to educate and persuade the public, such as social media (Instagram) and print media (banners and posters).</p>
3	<b>Social Responsibility Approach</b>	<p><b>Program monitoring and evaluation as internal social responsibility approach;</b> to create harmonious relationships and improve welfare and performance satisfaction</p> <p><b>The empowerment and maintenance of environmental quality</b> through the smart city program as the external social responsibility approach; to maintaining the quality of the environment (planet) and fulfilling the welfare of the district community (people).</p> <p><b>The internal cooperation approach</b> is carried out within the internal scope of the organization to align the vision, mission, goals and strategies owned.</p>
4	<b>The Collaboration Approach</b>	<p><b>The external cooperation approach</b> is carried out by DISKOMINFO with several Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) of Blitar Regency, educational institutions, to business people both within the district and outside the district.</p>



No.	The PR Operational Strategy Approach	Implementation
5	<b>Coordinating and Integrative Approach</b>	<p><b>Coordination approach</b> was carried out by the DISKOMINFO with the Regional Government, Apparatus Organization and Internal Community as a form of coordinating approach in socializing the smart city program; to coordinate activities or programs, ensuring that all components of the community synergize together to achieve the goals set.</p> <p><b>Integrative approach</b> also was carried out to equalize and unite various components and elements to the objectives of the program with the vision and mission of the 5 devotions of Blitar Regency.</p>

Source: results of data processing by researchers

DISKOMINFO Blitar's PR strategy illustrates how localized public communication grounded in planning, collaboration, and participatory values impacted each pillar's successful socialization of complex programs. The findings represent Ruslan's five strategic PR approaches. This also supports the point of Widodo and Permatasari (2020) that socialization plays a major role in shaping societal behavior and acceptance of smart innovation.

Practically, the study highlights the importance of integrating PR early in smart program processes, especially in non-metropolitan areas. Future research could compare Blitar's strategy with other districts to identify patterns or divergences, contributing to a broader understanding of PR's role in socializing and implementing smart programs across Indonesia.

## Conclusion

The data collected showed that the Communication and Information Agency (DISKOMINFO) of Blitar Regency applied Ruslan's five PR approaches: operational, persuasive and educative, social responsibility, collaborative, and coordinative and integrative strategies. The government also implemented its strategies in a complementary and adaptive manner, aligning communication efforts with its goals and the broader developmental vision of Blitar Regency, focusing on socializing the smart city program.

The findings revealed that operational strategies formed the foundation of the socialization process by structuring the operational steps into four main stages: problem identification, master plan development, intensive training and technical guidance, and program evaluation. These stages were complemented by persuasive and educative approaches that utilized printed and digital media to deliver consistent and comprehensible messages to the public. The social responsibility approach strengthened public trust and legitimacy by embedding mutual benefits into smart program activities to maintain and improve social quality.

Meanwhile, collaborative strategies enhanced synergy between internal divisions and external stakeholders, although with documentation limitations regarding sustainability and effectiveness. The coordinative and integrative approach significantly ensured that the program's implementation aligned with the Blitar district's vision and public understanding. These five approaches reflect technical communication practices and underscore PR's strategic role in integrating institutional legitimacy, social engagement, and inter-organizational coherence. The alignment with Ruslan's theoretical model strengthens the idea that PR functions as an integrative mechanism in implementing public policy, particularly in digital governance. Blitar's effort and experience provide valuable lessons for other local governments, particularly in rural regions, on how to adapt PR strategies to social, cultural, and institutional contexts.

It also highlights the need to strengthen collaborative approaches to ensure long-term impact and replicability. In addition, to maximize the use of social media platforms such as TikTok and the "X" application to increase social engagement in obtaining the program's innovation. Practically, the research highlights the PR strategy for socializing the government's program "100 Smart Cities Movement." It emphasizes that the government needed to add and improve cooperation or relations with central organizations or those outside East Java. For the institution, this research underlined the value of embedding public relations early in the socializing and implementing digital transformation agendas. Coordinated strategies which could significantly enhance program acceptance and long-term success.

In addition, the future research may explore the measurable impacts of each PR approaches on public participation and programs effectiveness. Comparative studies across districts could extend the understanding of how PR strategies in socializing the program, more specifically, regarding the effectiveness its approaches in socializing the smart city program through quantitative methods.

## References

- Akbar, Muslimin. 2018. "Strategi Humas DISHUB Dalam Mensosialisasikan Tentang PERDA No.16 Tahun 2011 Kepada Masyarakat Kota Palembang (Studi Kasus Pada Parkir Liar Di PS Mall)." Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang.
- Ansori, *Kabupaten Blitar Dalam Angka 2018 Blitar Regency in Figures*, Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Blitar, 2015, III
- Arista, Cynthia Puteri, 'Public Relations Strategy in Disseminating Informations Through Media of the People ' s Strategi Humas Dinas Komunikasi Dan Informatika ( DISKOMINFO ) Provinsi Jawa Barat Dalam Mensosialisasikan Informasi Melalui Program Media Pertunjukan Rakyat', 317–22
- Blitar, Pemerintah Kabupaten, 'Profil Dinas Komunikasi Dan Informatika Kabupaten Blitar', *Dinas Komunikasi Dan Informatika Kabupaten Blitar*, 2023 <<https://kominfo.blitarkab.go.id/selayang-pandang/>>
- Citra, Annisa, 'PERENCANAAN KOMUNIKASI DINAS KOMUNIKASI, INFORMATIKA, STATISTIK DAN PERSANDIAN KOTA PEKANBARU DALAM MENSOSIALISASIKAN PROGRAM SMART CITY', *Jom Fisip*, 4.2 (2017), 1–13  
<<https://www.neliti.com/publications/199308/perencanaan-komunikasi-dinas-komunikasi-informatika-statistik-dan-persandian-kot>>
- Hambali, Muthia Megawati Putri, D.D.V.Kawengian, and Lingkan E.Tulung, 'Strategi Humas Perusahaan Donggi Senoro Liquefied Natural Gas Dalam Membangun Citra Positif Melalui Program Corporate Social Responsibility Y Di K Ecamatan Batui K Abupaten Bangga', *Acta Diurna*, 6.1 (2017), 5–6
- Kriyantono, Rachmat, *Teknik Praktis: Riset Komunikasi / Rachmat Kriyantono*, Edisi pert (Jakarta: Kencana Prenadamedia Group, 2009)
- , *TEKNIK PRAKTIS RISET KOMUNIKASI Disertai Contoh Praktis Riset Media, Public Relations, Adversting, Komunikasi Organisasi, Komunikasi Pemasaran*, Pertama (Jakarta: Kencana Prenadamedia Group, 2006)
- , *Teknik Praktis Riset Komunikasi Kuantitaif Dan Kualitatif*, 9th edn (Jakarta: KENCANA, 2021)
- Linjani, Aprilia. 2018. "Strategi Komunikasi Pemerintah Kota Tangerang Selatan Dalam Mensosialisasikan Program Smart City." Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah.
- Lubis, AY. 2017. "Memahami Budaya-Cyber, Sastra-Cyber Dari Pemikiran Jean Baudrillard Dan William Gibson." *Susastra FIB UI*.

- Muhammad Syarif Hartawan, Arman Syah Putra, and Ayub Muktiono. 2020. "Smart City Concept for Integrated Citizen Information Smart Card or ICISC in DKI Jakarta." *International Journal of Science, Technology & Management* 1(4):364–70. doi: 10.46729/ijstm.v1i4.76.
- Najah, Arjun. 2021. "Strategi Manajemen Humas Dalam Membangun Kerjasama Eksternal Di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Malang." Universitas Islam Negeri MAulana Malik Ibrahim.
- Ruslan, Rosady. 2017. *Manajemen Public Relations & Media Komunikasi*. cetakan 13. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers.
- Regency, Statistics Of Blitar, *Kabupaten Blitar Dalam Angka (Blitar Regency in Figures)*, 2022 <<https://www.ptonline.com/articles/how-to-get-better-mfi-results>>
- Sekretariat Daerah Kabupaten Blitar, 'Profil Pemerintah Kabupaten Blitar (Gambaran Umum Kabupaten)', *Pemerintah Kabupaten Blitar*, 2012 <<https://www.blitarkab.go.id/2012/06/06/gambaran-umum-2/>>
- , 'Profil Pemerintah Kabupaten Blitar (Sejarah Kabupaten Blitar)', *Pemerintah Kabupaten Blitar*, 2012 <<https://www.blitarkab.go.id/2012/06/05/sejarah-kabupaten-blitar/>>
- , 'Profil Pemerintah Kabupaten Blitar (Visi Dan Misi Kabupaten)', 2012 <<https://www.blitarkab.go.id/visi-dan-misi-kabupaten-blitar-2021-2024/>>
- 'SK No 249 Th 2018 Ttg Pelaksana Smart City.Pdf'
- Susanto, Eko, *Perhitungan Indeks Kepuasan Masyarakat Dinas Komunikasi Dan Informatika Kabupaten Blitar Perhitungan Indeks Kepuasan Masyarakat Ii Dinas Komunikasi Dan Informatika Kabupaten Blitar*, 2021
- Wahid, Umaimah-, and Nurzahara Amalia. 2020. "Tantangan Humas Pemerintah Daerah Dalam Upaya Publikasi Inovasi Program Smart City." *Nyimak: Journal of Communication* 4(1):35. doi: 10.31000/nyimak.v4i1.2300.
- Widodo, Aan, and Diah Ayu Permatasari. 2020. "Strategi Komunikasi Dalam Program Bekasi Smart City." *ETTISAL: Journal of Communication* 5(1). doi: 10.21111/ejoc.v5i1.3454.

