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A Systematic Review of Adaptive Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022

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ABSTRACT

Backround: The interplay between university systems and public relations has emerged as a significant trend in how universities enhance their reputations. **Purpose:** This article aims to map and analyze the state of public relations research in the context of universities, as well as discuss the extent to which the science communication framework has been incorporated into these studies. **Method**: A systematic literature review was conducted on four leading public relations journals during the period of 2010-2022. **Results:** The findings indicate that overall public relations research has increased significantly over the review period, the quantity of studies specifically focused on university-related public relations remains minimal. Across the four journals examined, only 21 articles addressed such cases, with the majority of authors hailing from the USA and a prominent focus on crisis communication topics. Examining these findings from an organizational and systemic perspective reveals insights into the unique dynamics and communication goals of higher education institutions, which differ significantly from the traditional corporate and government focus of much public relations research. **Conclusion**: The existing literature's limited focus on university-specific public relations underscores the need for further research in this domain. Particularly important is incorporating the science communication framework to better understand the unique communication goals and practices of higher education institutions as they engage the public around scientific topics **Implications:** the core idea that studies on university public relations reveal

how these educational institutions have unique communication practices compared to the typical business and government focus of public relations research.

Keywords: public relations, university, science communication, systematic review

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INTRODUCTION

Public relations practices in higher education institutions increasingly play an essential role in communicating science (Fänrich, 2018; Borchelt and Nielsen, 2014). Besides educational institutions, universities are scientific organizations that carry out public communication functions to disseminate information and scientific discourse to build public perception and knowledge of science and its benefits. At the same time, universities must improve their reputation through various communication and media activities.

Many universitas then set up dedicated PR units or broader strategic communications units. This encourages more comprehensive and intense PR or strategic communication practices by these science organizations. On the other hand, PR research has so far been dominated by cases in companies or government organizations (Huang et al., 2017). However, Nutsugah & Anani-Bossman's (2023) study in the Ghanaian context found that educational institutions are a popular case of PR research besides the financial industry in the country. This article will examine the portrait or landscape of PR research with universities as cases or objects in leading PR and communication strategy journals. This is necessary to understand this topic and can help develop a future research agenda regarding public relations and science communication.

Many organizations, including higher education institutions, consider the PR function increasingly crucial due to changes in the increasingly complex communication environment after the second decade of this millennium. The existence of the digital world and the increasing diversity of communication channels means that various organizations face increasingly wider and varied audiences and increasingly complex communication problems. The relationship between organizations (including universities) and their publics differs significantly from the era before this information disruption when the contemporary public became very active and sensitive to what organizations were doing. But of course, the portrait of PR practices (scale and quality) at various universities varies, depending on internal and external factors.

Universities as educational institutions and scientific organizations have very different characteristics from other organizations. From a systems perspective, universities are a structural coupling between science and education systems (Sakai, 2023). As a science organization, one of the university's main tasks is related to public understanding of science, which is more broadly related to science communication. On the one hand, universities, especially private universities, have "hybrid" characteristics as social institutions and business (corporate) entities. However, what are university PR practices like these days? Are they no different from PR practices in companies and government institutions? One of the efforts to answer this question can be started by reviewing PR research with universities as the object or the case in peer-reviewed journals. It is also helpful to know in more detail about the most popular approach choices, the more frequently used methods, and the findings that stand out in research on that topic. Identifying existing research gaps or gaps related to PR, universities, and communicating science is also the motive or aim of this article.

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PR research, which has so far developed rapidly (Volk, 2016; Thelen, 2021; Page & Capizzo, 2021), faces the challenge of exploring further the state of knowledge about its structure and evolution (Ki, Pasadeos, & Ertem-Eray, 2021). In other words, it is essential to investigate the flow of knowledge, growth of literature, theoretical developments, and future directions of the field, both in general and specific contexts (Ki, Pasadeos, & Ertem-Eray, 2021, Wang, Cheng, & Sun, 2021) including concerning important fields such as science communication (VanDyke & Lee, 2020). This article maps public relations research with university or higher education topics or cases to color the existing PR literature landscape.

PR studies are developing rapidly, and several studies have mapped the conditions so far, both generally and specifically, including Pasadeos et al. (2010), Ye & Ki (2012), Jain et al. (2014), Meadows & Meadows III (2014), Duhé (2015), Volk (2016), Xu & Huang (2016), Wang et al. (2021), Ki, et al. (2021), Thelen (2021), Page & Capizzon (2021), Dong et al. (2023), Nutsugah & Anani-Bossman (2023), Zhou et al (2023). As a field of study, public relations faces practical and theoretical challenges driven by internal conditions as well as external matters such as rapid technological developments and social changes regarding communication that occur on a global scale.

Topics related to PR and digital technology have become one of the popular topics and have attracted a lot of attention among scholars recently (See Wang et al, 2021; Huang et al., 2017). According to Ye & Ki (2012), there are three trends in PR research in the literature map, namely (a) citation analysis, (b) analysis of overall public relations research studies, and (c) analysis of a particular topic. Meanwhile, the findings of Zhou et al. (2023) show that 9 clusters developed in PR research throughout 2010-2020, namely strategic management being the most dominant cluster and the most popular cluster for interacting with other research traditions, public relations professionalism, digital media, crisis communication, global public relations, rhetoric and philosophy, media relations, and critical studies. What was then encouraged by Zhou et al. (2023) was the need for an "alternative" perspective in PR research, which was essential to pursue, as previously expressed by Gower (2006).

Extensive research conducted by Ki et al. (2021) through bibliometric analysis of public relations publications from 1983 to 2019 shows how this field has evolved. The main finding is that the growth and popularity of global public relations in scholarship are steady. More remarkably, articles and citations have exploded since 2010 (Ki et al., 2021). In a more specific aspect related to authorship, North American/western countries/global north scholars still dominate PR literature, as shown by Macnamara (2012), Volk (2016), Ki et al. (2021), Page & Capizzo (2021), as well as Wang et al. (2021). In their research, Ki et al. (2021) show that the important and most frequently referred authors in PR research are those who come from or are affiliated with institutions from Western countries. However, research by Xu & Huang (2016) shows that PR articles in the Asian context published during 1994-2014 were still dominated by authors affiliated with Asian institutions (n = 86, 53.1%), followed by U.S. institutions (n = 69, 42.6%).

In research by Jain et al. (2014), the three outstanding theories were excellence theory/symmetrical communication. Grunig's models of public relations practice, cultural/critical perspective, and organization-public relationship or relationship management. This aligns with Gower's (2006) article, which shows that Two-way symmetrical communication is the dominant theoretical paradigm. Meanwhile, Xu & Huang (2016) found that there were seven most frequently used theories in public relations research in Asia between 1995 and 2014: four models of PR, framing, relationship management, the contingency theory of accommodation, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, situational crisis communication theory, and the excellence theory. Concerning social media, the dominant theories in PR research are dialogic theory, situational crisis communication theory, uses and gratifications, and excellence theory (Wang et al., 2021).

In the methodological aspect, research by Wang et al. (2021) regarding social media-related public relations research shows that the two most popular methods are surveys and content analysis. This is in line with the findings of Ye & Ki (2012) that content analysis and surveys are the most popular procedures. Meanwhile, Xu & Huang (2016) found that a quantitative methods approach dominates Asian PR research. The same portrait is also shown by research by Jain et al. (2014) and Huang et al. (2017). A different picture is demonstrated by a study by Dong et al. (2023), that government public relations (GPR) research is dominated by qualitative research and also research by Meadows & Meadows III (2014) which shows PR research in two leading journals, namely Journal of Public Relations Research and The Public Relations Review during the period 1975-2013 was dominated by qualitative research. Researchers also show mix-methods development in PR research as trends like this are developing more generally in the context of communication science and social science (Meadows & Meadows III, 2014). The presence and increasingly widespread use of digital media or technology has also encouraged the development of PR research methodology (Wang et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2017).

The general overview of the PR research map above shows that PR research is increasing. Still, there is dominance, or perhaps it could be called stagnation, at specific points in aspects of authorship, methods, and the theories/concepts used. So what about the special conditions of the PR research map in the case of universities and related to science communication? From the initial search that we carried out directly on publication databases and several leading journals, it seems that no research has systematically mapped the condition of PR research with cases or focuses on higher education institutions such as universities and in broader relation to science communication.

This field (public relations studies with university cases) may be starting to receive attention, as shown in the Ghanaian context (Nutsugah & Anani-Bossman, 2023). Still, this needs to be examined further in the global context to find out the full portrait. Will the picture of PR research with the university case or topic align with or differ in some aspects from the general picture of PR research as outlined above? To capture a more complete landscape of public relations and university research, this article uses the following research question:

RQ1: What is the general trend of research on PR and university topics during the 2010-2022 period in prominen PR journals ?

RQ2: What is the profile of authorship, methods, topics, theories, and concepts that develop in PR and university research?

RQ3: To what extent is science communication used as a framework in PR research for universities/higher education institutions as a science organization?

RESEARCH METHOD

Several methods can be helpful in mapping and understanding an issue or topic in the literature landscape, and one of the common ones is a systematic review (Victor, 2008; Volk, 2016; Xiao & Watson, 2019; Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022;). According to Xiao and Watson (2019) by reviewing relevant literature, we understand the breadth and depth of the existing body of work and identify gaps to explore.

Systematic review has several advantages, the most important of which is its capacity to generate an exhaustive or balanced picture of the current state of knowledge in an explicit and transparent methodical way (Volk, 2016). This article uses a systematic review to answer research questions and fulfill previously set objectives. For this reason, several research stages have been prepared, from determining the journal as a source, keywords for search purposes, determining the duration or period, type of literature, data collection, exclusion or filtering, coding/extraction, and analysis.

The data or articles collected and analyzed come from public relations and strategic communication journals. Journal identification was done by searching the Scimago database and entering the keyword "public relations." With the keyword "public relations," 14 names of journals appeared, which were then filtered by looking at their aim and scope as well as their ranking (Q1 and Q2). Four journals were then selected to be data sources. Four journals were selected from the category/keyword "public relations," namely *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and *Public Relations Inquiry*.

We also included one leading journal in strategic communication, *the International Journal of Strategic Communication*, which publishes many public relations articles. The publication period for the articles collected is 2010-2022. This duration was chosen because, in this decade, the communication environment has become increasingly complex due to the increasingly intense and expansive digital world, bringing an increasingly strong influence on many things, including PR practices, higher education dynamics, and science communication. Apart from that, as stated by Ki et al. (2021), the number of articles and citations of PR has exploded since 2010.

Data collection was carried out by browsing the journal website pages mentioned above. Searches are carried out manually and automatically on the pages/websites of each journal. For this purpose, several keywords are used as a guide, namely "university," "higher education," and "college." In the initial stage,

these keywords are entered into the search facility on the pages of each journal to see a general portrait. Next is a manual search for each edition of the publication using the keywords above as a guide to search for the title and abstract of the article. The types of publications collected are only research articles and exclude book reviews, editorials, policy discussions, and commentaries. In the *Public Relations Review*, data is also taken from the Research in Brief section and Full-Length Articles. Two researchers collected data to ensure minimal or no missed data or articles. The search results of the two researchers will be matched and rechecked against the journal source if there are differences. Articles related to public relations education or pedagogy in universities or higher education are not this article's object of study or analysis.

Data was coded and analyzed based on the following categories: general trend, authorship, method, topic, and theory/concept. General trends include describing the number of articles published yearly and by journal name. Furthermore, authorship consists of the author's name, affiliation, and region. Then, the method is coded based on the approach (qualitative, quantitative, mixed-method) and procedure (survey, interview, content analysis, experiment, focus group, case study, ethnography, etc.). Meanwhile, topics are identified deductively in each journal article by reviewing the title, keywords, and abstract. Theories identified in each piece can consist of a single theory or multiple theories. In addition, tracking the keyword "science communication" or anything relevant to this in the articles collected was also carried out to answer the third research question (RQ 3).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Science communication is a field that is considered increasingly important in the situation of contemporary society, which is facing various complex social problems, the threat of the climate crisis, the declining quality of democracy, phenomena such as the death of expertise and the spread of misinformation, and in general the broad impact of the development of digital technology (Gascoigne & Leach, 2020; Orthia et al., 2021; Leßmöllmann, 2020). Science communication has several explanations from various perspectives and has experienced developments ranging from the deficit model to science communication in context (Leßmöllmann & Gloning, 2020; Schäfer et al., 2020).

The concept of science communication is sometimes explained with terms such as "science popularisation," "public understanding," "vulgarization," "public understanding of science," and the cultivation of a "scientific temper" (Gascoigne & Leach, 2020). According to Burns et al. (2003), science communication may be defined as the use of appropriate skills, media, activities, and dialogue to communicate about scientific research to the public in order to produce one or more of the following: awareness, enjoyment, interest, opinions and/or understanding about science. Meanwhile, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2017) stated that science communication is more complex than simply translating the jargon of science into language the public understands.

If science communication is understood in an organizational context, which, according to Autzen and Weitkamp (2020), is still insufficiently exposed and researched, then it will be related to the role of universities as one of the primary forms of science organization. Universities are responsible for communicating science or encouraging public understanding of science based on the research activities carried out and the outputs resulting from it.

The relationship between universities and the public can be understood in various conceptual and practical models. This relationship can be placed in the context of science communication and public relations in this article. This relationship can be placed in the context of science communication and public relations in this article. This means that the university's efforts to connect with its public for science communication purposes should ideally be discussed in a public relations frame. According to Van Dyke & Lee (2020), public relations and science communication scholarship have evolved in ways that overlap, contrast, and complement. They then underline that as science becomes increasingly interdisciplinary, science public relations research should pay attention to this, for example, by investigating how organizations (e.g., universities) seek to build relationships with internal publics (e.g., faculties) in this regard.

Meanwhile, Borchelt & Nielsen (2008) show that the PR function for scientific organizations might usefully be thought of as managing the trust portfolio. They explained further that PR practices in science organizations are to cultivating or maintaining trust in the ability of the organization to do science, advocacy or science policy (Borchelt & Nielsen, 2008). Science communication and PR, especially in the context of science organizations or can be referred to as science public relations, need to be explored further (Autzen and Weitkamp, 2020; VanDyke & Lee, 2020). To find out to what extent the science communication approach appears or is used in public relations research in the case of science organizations such as universities, the following research questions were formulated:

Previous studies have shown that PR research has developed in quantity and quality globally. More specific research regarding PR and universities or higher education institutions follow the same path, although the acceleration is far from the general picture of PR research, which is proliferating. The following table shows the number of university- or higher education-related public relations research articles in the four leading journals in this field from 2010 to 2022. The data shows that Public Relations Review published the most articles on this topic (14 articles) and the least number of articles in the Journal of Public Relations Research (1 article). However, the articles in the Public Relations Review consist of two types: Research Article and Research in Brief. Twenty-one articles were published in these four journals during 2010-2022 Table 1 presents the number of articles published in four leading public relations journals during the 2010-2022 period. A portrait of the number of articles by year (Image 1) shows that the most articles were published in 2021 (7 articles),The data shows the overall trend in public relations research output, as well as the specific number of articles focused on the context of universities or higher education institutions.

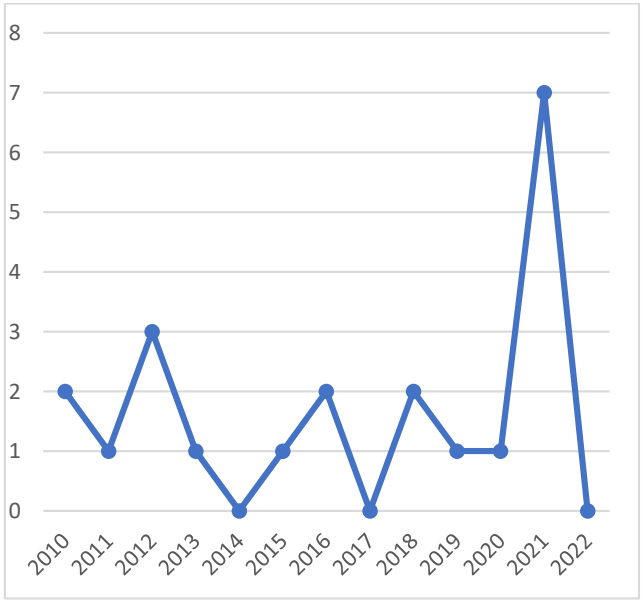
Table 1 Number of Articles in Four Journals for the 2010-2022

Journals	Total article	University PR- focus Journal
Public Relations Review	1,042	9
Journal of Public Relations Research	349	5
International Journal of Strategic Communication	239	3
Journal of Communication Management	205	4
Total	1,835	21

Source: Researchers' data, 2023

The data reveals that while the overall volume of public relations research published in these four journals increased substantially over the 12-year period, the number of articles specifically focused on the university or higher education context remained relatively low, accounting for only 21 out of the total 1,835 articles.

This disparity suggests that the public relations research community has not given sufficient attention to understanding the unique communication dynamics and challenges faced by universities and other educational institutions, particularly in relation to the science communication framework. The limited representation of university-focused studies underscores the need for further exploration and expansion of this research area.



Source: Researchers' data, 2023

Figure 1 Number of articles by year 2010-2022

Most of the authors of the articles are from the USA or affiliated with universities in the USA. Apart from the USA, several authors come from Spain, Germany, Yemen, Australia, Egypt, Norway, and New Zealand. If looked at by region, no authors are affiliated with universities in South America, Central America, or Africa. Most articles were written in groups of two or more authors (13 articles); the rest were single authors. Meanwhile, there are only two articles where the authors' university affiliations come from different countries. The article "The Effect of Relationship Cultivation Strategies on Organizational Reputation in Conflict Zones: The Case of Yemeni Private Universities" was written by three scholars from Egypt, Yemen, and the USA. Analysis of the titles and abstracts of the articles that have been collected shows that the topic of crisis is the primary concern, as shown in World Cloud (Figure 2) and the table below (Table 2). The context of the crisis studied in these articles is the "internal" crisis faced by the university and the "external" crisis that the institution responded to.

Source: Researchers' data, 2023

Figure 2 The Most Popular

The analysis of the text in the image reveals that it is a word cloud centered around the theme of "crisis communication" as it pertains to universities. The prominent terms include "crisis," "communication," "university," and "public," indicating their significance or frequency in the related text. Other notable words in the word cloud are "study," "institutional," "relations," "reputation," "engagement," and "research."

The word cloud suggests a focus on how higher education institutions manage communication and their public image during crises. Additionally, smaller words scattered throughout the image hint at related themes and concepts such as "case," "media," "social," "analysis," "management," and "education." Word clouds are commonly used to summarize key themes or topics in a body of text, such as reports, articles, or research papers.

Table 1 Keywords Tracked in Title and Abstract

Keywords	Quantity
Crisis	49
Communication	36
Study	31
Public	26
University	26
Reputation	18
Relations	16
Management	14
Education	14

Source: Researchers' data, 2023

The two most prominent methods from the 21 articles are content analysis and case study, apart from survey, experimental, ethnography, and literature review or essay, which also appear as method choices. Several studies using content analysis methods include those carried out by Jina, Park, & Len-Ríos (2010), McAllister (2012), Linvill, McGee, & Hicks (2012). This method is divided into content analysis with quantitative and qualitative approaches. One of the methodologically exciting pieces is the article entitled New Insights into Crisis Communication from an "Inside" Emic Perspective During COVID-19 by Jim Macnamara (2021), which uses ethnography and auto ethnography.

In terms of theory and concepts, the most frequently used is crisis communication, including crisis management, apart from dialogic theory, strategic communication, Organizational reputation, Image Repair Strategies (IRT), Corporate social responsibility, and diffusion of innovations, which are used in a number of articles. Eight articles use crisis communication, including crisis management and its variations, as a theoretical framework or central concept. This result aligns with the topic of crisis, which is prominent, as previously mentioned. Meanwhile, a search for the keyword "science communication" carried out on the abstracts of 21 articles to answer RQ3 showed zero results, which means that almost all articles did not use this framework.

Public relations studies related to higher education have several contexts, including studies on the role of public relations in higher education, studies of the relationship between universities and their public, and studies of how PR plays a role in conveying the specific code of higher education as a scientific development institution. This article has the idealism to encourage the position of PR in universities, which plays the role of communicating science in such a way that it follows the core code of universities as research and educational institutions. This article wants to see how Public Relations journals portray existing PR

practices and to what extent this issue is raised. Higher education homework should have different functional differentiation than PR practices at other institutions with different functions.

Several findings described in the previous section show that the field of PR studies in the case of universities or higher education institutions has not developed optimal if we look at the number of articles published throughout 2010-2022 in the four leading journals in the field of PR (Public Relations Review, Journal of Public Relations Research, and Public Relations Inquiry, and International Journal of Strategic Communication). This is ironic considering universities' rapid global development in the last few decades, with the PR function almost always playing an essential role in their organization and communication.

The findings presented confirm several portraits or findings from previous studies regarding topic, method, and theory, although they are somewhat different. The dominance of US scholars is in line with findings in the context of public relations studies in general by Macnamara (2012), Volk (2016), Ki, Pasadeos, & Ertem-Eray, (2021), Page & Capizzo (2021), and Wang, Ceng, & Sun (2021). At this point, efforts to enrich PR studies with the case of universities or higher education institutions need to be made by encouraging publications from scholars from other regions, such as Africa, Asia, and South America, for example, through special editions. The dynamics of PR from universities or higher education institutions in these countries with different social and educational backgrounds will provide diverse and valuable perspectives for developing this discipline, both practically and academically. The fact that crisis is the primary concern of scholars in this topic or study shows findings that align with research by Zhou et al. (2023) that 9 clusters developed in PR research throughout 2010-2020, one of which is crisis communication. This finding is also identical to the study by Míguez-González, Baamonde-Silva, and Corbacho-Valencia (2014) in a specific context in Spain, which shows that crisis communication is a popular theme among PR researchers in that country.

According to Borchelt and Nielsen (2008), taking a broader approach to PR may also be useful rather than thinking of it as something that one unit in an organization does. In other words, PR studies need to be pushed from studies at the messo or organizational level to the macro level. The systems approach applied in PR studies is seen in Susanne Hölmstrom's article entitled Niklas Luhmann: Contingency, risk, trust and reflection. In this article, the author conveys two critical main ideas. First, Luhmann's autopoietic system theory enables the identification of frames for understanding public relations in interrelation with society's overall coordination processes. Second, Luhmann's theory and analysis are central to public relations research and practice, given that public relations as a social practice is embedded in conflicts of legitimacy (Hölmstrom, 2007; Luhmann, 2002).

Hölmstrong uses the core concept of Luhmann's autopoietic system theory, namely "observation," to describe PR as a referential system. She highlights two fundamental values: the orientation of self-reflection and inter-systemic relations in modern society through "reflexivity" and "reflection." According to him, reflexivity implies a monocontextual, narcissistic perspective from within, from where the organization

takes its own worldview for given, takes what it sees to be the one reality, the only truth – and consequently conflicts blindly with different worldviews (Hölmstrong, 2007). Meanwhile, In reflection, the perspective rises to a higher level, facilitating a poly-contextual worldview (Hölmstrong, 2007). In Hölmström's study, public relations is placed in the context of the horizontal logic of modern society, acting as a system that is imagined to be able to represent the specific "public" interests of a particular social system with diverse actors from a specific environment. Public relations can be a unit that guarantees the value of temporal sustainability or sharpens the value of responsibility, a significant value that must be realized in modern society in inter-systemic relations.

More specifically, studying public relations at universities or higher education institutions also allows us to see and understand the relationship between public relations as a specific system and science as a system. Science itself can be understood as “the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence” (The Science Council, 2020). In Luhmann's system logic, science is a functionally differentiated subsystem of modern society that uses the communication medium (truth) for its own reproduction and to construct and obtain new knowledge (Baraldi et al.2021). The scientific system works by distinguishing between true and untrue, theoretically and methodologically (Baraldi et al.2021). Higher education is an institution that represents institutional science, so when PR becomes part of this institution, it should become part of the value of developing science. Functional differentiation in PR work should provide a unique color to the system so that the main characteristics of the system are still reflected in PR work Exploration of the position of public relations as a system within the university system and its relationship to the science system requires a broader scope than can be provided in this article. Exploration of the position of PR as a system within the university system and related to the scientific system requires a broader space than this article.

CONCLUSION

A good review study should not only provide implications for theoretical development but also offer lessons or advice for practitioners (Eriksson, 2018; Wang et al., 2021). This article explicitly shows that the landscape of studies regarding PR and its relationship to communicating science is minimal but has strong potential for theory development. Public relations practices in higher education can be a fascinating study to see how the uniqueness of public relations practices with different organizational character backgrounds can be theorized more comprehensively. This study reflects the differentiation of functions in public relations work in various systems for practitioners. From this study, it is hoped that spaces for development in PR studies can be encouraged continuously so that they do not stop at dominant viewpoints. The increasingly dynamic development of modern society can no longer be read in terms of linear relationships between organizations and their environment. At this point, a systemic perspective is needed to capture the dynamics of the system's relationship with its environment, which is complex.

The limitations of this article relate to journal sources, which are still limited to specific "public relations" journals, which need to be expanded to include media and communication journals, including journalism and higher education journals. Likewise, it is imperative to map publications in journals in regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America to see the broader development of PR studies, for example, those carried out by Molleda, Morena, & Navarro (2017), Nutsugah & Anani-Bossman (2023), or Xu & Huang (2016). Articles related to public relations education or pedagogy in universities or higher education institutions are not the object of study or analysis in this article. Another related limitation is that this article does not include some research related to PR in the case of research organizations such as Research Centers, which also need to be reviewed concerning the communicative function of science. Future research may be able to do this to fill various gaps in this article. In addition, bibliometric analysis could be used to expand the explanatory reach of this article.

Although there are some limitations, this article highlights the significance of linking public relations with various grand theories of social science. This connection is crucial for enhancing public relations theory in the future. By adopting an inclusive approach, a new and robust perspective will emerge in understanding the phenomenon of public relations, which plays an increasingly important role in modern, intersystemic society.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, A.M and H.I.; methodology, A.M.; software, A.M.; validation, AM.. formal analysis, AM.; investigation, A.M.; resources, A.M.; data curation, A.M.; writing—original draft preparation, A.M.; writing—review and editing, A.M.; visualization, H.I.; supervision, AM.; project administration, A.M.; funding acquisition, all authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript."

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2.Bukti Konfirmasi Review dan Hasil Review Pertama

(20 September 2024)

mail-UMI

Abd. Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id>

[PRH] Self Evaluation Article for Author

2 messages

redaksi profesihumas <profesihumas@gmail.com> Fri, Sep 20, 2024 at 2:54 PM
To: Majid Abd Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id>

Dear. Mr/Mrs
Abd. Majid
Author of PRofesi Humas

Thank you for sending Mr/Mrs. article entitled "A Systematic Review of Adaptive Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022"

This message conveys that the article requires completeness, as stated in the self-evaluation form (attached). Please do a self-evaluation of your paper based on the points provided. If it is not appropriate, please make adjustments first.
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Abd. Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id> Fri, Dec 27, 2024 at 1:02 PM
To: redaksi profesihumas <profesihumas@gmail.com>

To the Editorial Team,

Journal of PRofesi Humas

I would like to express my gratitude for your email regarding my article titled "**Systematic Review of Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022**" I have received the information about the need to complete the article with the attached self-evaluation form and have made the necessary evaluations and adjustments.

I would like to inquire about the publication timeline. Are there any additional steps I need to take to ensure a smooth process?

Thank you for your attention and cooperation. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Abd Majid
Universitas Muslim Indonesia
abd.majid@umi.ac.id

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PRofesi Humas
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#56522 Review

SUMMARY | REVIEW | EDITING

Submission

Authors	Abd Majid, Hermin Indah Wahyuni, Ana Nadhya Abrar, Andi Awaluddin Fitrah
Title	Systematic review of university public relations communication strategies: 2010–2022
Section	Research Article
Editor	redaksi profesihumas Ali Roziqin, M.PA Dr. Ejiro Osiobe

Peer Review

Round 1

Review Version	56522-217940-2-RV.DOCX 2024-10-10
Initiated	2024-12-12
Last modified	2025-01-16
Uploaded file	None

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Self-Evaluation of Author Articles for PRofesi Humas 2024

Author's Name : Abd.Majid, Hermin Indah Wahyuni, Zelfia

Article's Title :

No HP/WA :

Put a checklist (√) on the article's checking points below. This form shows whether the article you submitted has complied with the author guidelines or not. If not, please adjust it first. Thank you.

NO.	Self-evaluation items (technical) ***If you answered NOT YET, then the article MUST be adjusted first, before you send it back**	DONE	NOT YET
	TURNITIN CHECK RESULTS by 18% **The result of the similarity check is not more than 20%**	**Done**	
1	TITLE		
	12 words maximum		
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	Times New Roman 14, Sentence case (Capital only on initial letters or indicate name, place, and time) Bold, Center, Spacing 1.15)		
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5	ABSTRACT		
	Written in one paragraph		
	200-300 words		
	No numbering		
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	Times New Roman 12, spacing 1, justify		
	Keywords consist of five words or phrases in English		
	Use a semicolon (;)		
	Abstract contains at least background, purpose, methods, results, conclusion, and implications.		
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	There is at least 1 table or 1 figure in the manuscript (maximum 6) **Table insertion procedure:** • Tables are created without vertical lines. • Horizontal lines only above (2 lines) and below (1 or 2 lines) • Tables are numbered, and table titles are placed above the table, left margin. • Title of table with Times New Roman 12pt, 1 space, **Bold**. • Contain of table with Times New Roman 10pt, 1 space. • Sources are listed at the bottom left of the table, Times New Roman 10pt, spacing 1. **See example below…**		
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9	CONCLUSION		
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1	The article is the result of field research (field research and not text analysis) in the field of **Public Relation Studies.**		
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4	The abstract already contains elements of an intro, objectives, methods, and research conclusions that are clear, complete, and structured		
5	Keywords are relevant to the content of the article.		
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9	**INTRODUCTION** is equipped with excerpts from previous research journal articles		
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11	**RESEARCH METHODS** already include the type of study, object and subject (samples/key informants, and number of those), data collection techniques, data analysis techniques, and locations that are complete and methodologically relevant.		
12	**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** have shown new findings		
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14	**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** already contains scientific analysis and synthesis as well as credible reference support		
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3. Bukti Konfirmasi Reviewer , Respon kepada Reviewer, dan Artikel yang Diresubmit

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Abd. Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id>

[PRH] Request for Article Improvement Based on Editor and 3 Reviewer Suggestions

2 messages

redaksi profesihumas <profesihumas@gmail.com> Thu, Jan 16, 2025 at 10:03 AM
To: Majid Abd Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id>

Dear Mr/Mrs
Abd Majid
Author of Jurnal PRofesi Humas

We have made a decision on your manuscript entitled "A Systematic Review of Adaptive Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022""

Our decision is that the article needs revision based on suggestions from the editor and two reviewers. Please make direct revisions and delete comments and existing forms if they have been revised. If you have finished, please upload one revision file (we recommend that revisions be made to the editor's suggestion file), by logging into jurnal.unpad.ac.id/profesi-humas, click the active link, click the article title link, click the review link, and upload it in the Upload Author Version section.

We hope to receive the article back by January 20, 2025. If so, please inform our editor via WA at 082316731181 (Dedeh Siti Kumia). Thus we convey. Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

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Abd. Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id> Sat, Jan 18, 2025 at 8:23 AM
To: redaksi profesihumas <profesihumas@gmail.com>

Dear Editorial

I am writing to confirm that I have completed the revisions for my manuscript titled "A Systematic Review of Adaptive Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022," as per the suggestions from the editor and reviewers. All comments have been addressed, and unnecessary forms have been removed.

I will upload the revised version through the specified link shortly. Thank you for the opportunity to improve my work. I look forward to your feedback.

Best regards,

Abd Majid

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Saran Reviewr 1

PRofesi Humas
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FORM OF REVIEWS FOR PRofesi Humas

General Comment The grammatical and citation errors as well as issues with bibliography/references were identified and corrected appropriately. Most of the citation and reference errors came from the use of the citation software. The proper use of the bracket, semicolon and comma were not properly inserted. The manuscript is good for publication.
Abstract *The abstract meets the scholarly requirement as its includes all the necessary parts of a typical abstract*
Introduction *The introduction clearly provide a good background, capable of convincing readers*
Research Method *The methodology is well presented*
Results and Discussion *The coverage of the results and discussion is good*

Conclusion *The conclusion is good*
Bibliography/reference and citations *Identified and corrected*
Another comment: please add any additional comment No more comment

RECOMMENDATION	CHECKLIST
Accepted	**Accepted**
Accept Pending (Minor Revision)	
Major Revision	
Rejected	

Saran Reviwer 2

PRofesi Humas
ISSN 2528-6927 (Printed)
ISSN 2541-3678 (Online)

FORM OF REVIEWS FOR PRofesi Humas

General Comment *The manuscript needs to be revised carefully in order to get results that are informative and meaningful for the reader.*
Abstract

Enhance by including a brief description of the study's duration, inclusion criteria, or data analysis methodology. Include important conclusions from the essay, such as themes, time patterns, or particular facets of university communication that were covered.

Only a brief mention of the methodologies is made ("A systematic literature review was conducted across four leading public relations journals"), with no explanation of the inclusion/exclusion criteria, data analysis, or article selection procedure. This makes it difficult for the reader to comprehend the methodical strategy that was used.

The abstract states that "only twenty-one articles were relevant" and that there has been a "significant increase in public relations research in general." It doesn't, however, go into detail about the selection process for the articles or offer concrete instances of the analysis's conclusions, including trends, patterns, or other recurring themes.

Introduction

1. The research focus on university public relations and adaptive communication techniques is not well covered in the introduction. Before going into more detail about PR in general, briefly describe the significance of university PR research and why it is worthwhile to investigate.

2. The problem statement is unclear and dispersed over several pages, despite the claim that university PR is under-researched. Make the problem statement clearer and more succinct so that readers know right away how urgent the research is.

3. Although efforts are made to identify research gaps, such as the preponderance of studies based in the West, these are not well developed—a more thorough explanation of the theoretical, methodological, and contextual limitations in university PR research.

Research Method

One of the many benefits of the systematic review approach employed in this study is that it offers a thorough, transparent, and organized analysis of the literature. Nevertheless, there are a number of drawbacks to this approach that should be taken into account, including:

1. The database used, and the keywords utilized determine the literature selection, even though it is done methodically. Leaving out pertinent papers or journals that are not searchable or not indexed in particular databases could lead to prejudice. The selection of Q1 and Q2 journals may exclude quality studies published in lower-ranked journals. Examine this decision and offer a compelling justification or foundation.

2. This study may lose historical viewpoints or longer trends that are important to comprehending PR dynamics overall due to the publication period (2010–2022) that was selected. Examine this decision and offer a compelling justification or foundation.

Results and Discussion

Conclusion

1. Although the limitations section is extensive, it takes up a large amount of the conclusion. Limitations should be acknowledged, but they shouldn't overwhelm the article's main conclusions or contributions. The study's strengths and shortcomings should be balanced to produce a more comprehensive conclusion.
2. Although the conclusion makes recommendations for future study, such as bibliometric analysis and PR reviews in research organizations, these recommendations are vague and unfocused. It would be more beneficial to provide more precise research topics or themes in order to direct future investigations.
3. The findings' practical implications for PR practitioners in higher education are not discussed in the conclusion. The significance of the conclusion would be increased by emphasizing how these findings might guide actual PR tactics or procedures within academic institutions.

Bibliography/reference and citations

Another comment: please add any additional comment

RECOMMENDATION	CHECKLIST
Accepted	
Accept Pending (Minor Revision)	
Major Revision	**v**
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	The manuscript has a proper article title (no abbreviations and subtitles)	**Very Good**
2	ABSTRACT	

	The abstract contains at least the background, purpose, methods, results, and implications with at least five relevant keywords.	Very Good
3	MANUSCRIPT	
	The manuscript section consists of **INTRODUCTION**, **RESEARCH METHODS**, **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**, **CONCLUSION**, **REFERENCES.**	Very Good
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	What is the manuscript's contribution to the files of research and was it well defined and explained	Wasn't well-stated or defined
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	Written in paragraphs without numbering and no quotation.	Very Good
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	The author has completed the **Author Contributions**, **Funding**, **Data Availability Statement**, **Acknowledgments**, and **Conflicts of Interest** sections.	Very Good
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Self-Evaluation of Author Articles for PRofesi Humas 2024

Author's Name : Abd.Majid, Hermin Indah Wahyuni, Ana Nadhya Abrar, Andi Awaluddin Fitrah

Article's Title : Systematic Review of Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022

No HP/WA : 085242243844

Put a checklist (√) on the article's checking points below. This form shows whether the article you submitted has complied with the author guidelines or not. If not, please adjust it first. Thank you.

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	TURNITIN CHECK RESULTS by 18% **The result of the similarity check is not more than 20%**	**Done**	
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	Times New Roman 14, Sentence case (Capital only on initial letters or indicate name, place, and time) Bold, Center, Spacing 1.15)	√	
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	All authors are written in full, according to the Metadata when submitting the article	√	
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1	The article is the result of field research (field research and not text analysis) in the field of **Public Relation Studies.**	√	
2	The title is a short and informative sentence.	√	
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4	The abstract already contains elements of an intro, objectives, methods, and research conclusions that are clear, complete, and structured	√	
5	Keywords are relevant to the content of the article.	√	
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9	**INTRODUCTION** is equipped with excerpts from previous research journal articles	√	
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12	**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** have shown new findings	√	
13	**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** are equipped with at least one informative and complimentary table or picture	√	
14	**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** already contains scientific analysis and synthesis as well as credible reference support	√	
15	**CONCLUSION** has directly answered the research objectives	√	
16	**CONCLUSION** already contains new ideas that will have a tangible impact on science and society	√	

17	**CONCLUSION** already contain Recommendations that will contribute to science and society	√	
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20	**REFERENCES** already contains at least **60%** of English language sources	√	
21	**REFERENCES** already contain at least **80% (20 sources**) from journal articles, with minimum **15 sources** from international journals.	√	
22	**REFERENCES** already consists of reference sources that are **not more than ten years old**	√	
Please review the substance of the article to avoid rejection from reviewers. We hope that your article can be published in our journal THANK YOU			

EXAMPLE OF TABLE INSERTION

Table 1 Length of Time in Business Using Instagram Social Media

No	Category	F	%
1	<6 months	8	12,9
2	7-9 months	4	6,4
3	10-12 months	11	17,7
4	13-24 months	13	21,0
5	>24 months	26	42,0
	Total	**62**	**100.0**

Source: Research Result, 2015

EXAMPLE OF FIGURE INSERTION

Source: Instagram, 2016

Figure 1 Photo Uploaded by Ridwan Kamil

Systematic Review of Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022

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Submitted: Month Year, **Revised:** Month Year, **Accepted:** Month Year, **Published:** Month Year

ABSTRACT

Background: The relationship between university systems and public relations has become crucial for enhancing institutional reputations. **Purpose:** This article aims to map and analyze public relations research within university contexts and assess the integration of the science communication framework in these studies. **Method:** A systematic literature review was conducted across four leading public relations journals. **Results:** Findings show a significant increase in overall public relations research; however, studies specifically focused on university-related public relations remain limited. Only twenty-one articles addressed this niche, predominantly authored by researchers from the USA, with a strong emphasis on crisis communication. Analyzing these findings from an organizational and systemic perspective reveals insight into the distinct communication dynamics and goals of higher education institutions, which differ markedly from the traditional corporate and governmental focus prevalent in public relations research**. Conclusion**: The concentration of research on crisis communication and the dominance of US-based authors highlight a gap in university-specific public relations literature. This underscores the necessity for further investigation in this area, particularly the integration of the science communication framework, which is vital for comprehending the unique communication practices of higher education institutions as they engage with the public on scientific topics. **Implications:** This study emphasizes that universities employ unique communication strategies that diverge from the conventional business and government focus in public relations research, revealing the need for a more nuanced understanding of their public relations practices.

Keywords: public relations, university, adaptive communication, systematic review

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INTRODUCTION

For four decades there has been a decline in public trust in higher education institutions. As a result, the public, media, and government are calling for open access to information, quality, and constructive governance of the higher education communication system (Campbell, 2010). It is important for higher education institutions to improve strategies in communicating the vision, success stories, culture, and symbols of the organization both directly and through the media so that they are known to the public (Callan & Immerwahr, 2008; Lederman & Lederman, 2017)). Public relations are a critical public, which is often overlooked in higher education organizations. Public relations not only select information to function well but also needs to understand the strategic direction of the organization. Public relations in universities is not only a complement but also an organizational public communication system that really determines the reputation of higher education.

Public relations practices in higher education institutions increasingly play an essential role in communicating science (Volk et al., 2023; Autzen & Weitkamp, 2014). Besides educational institutions, universities are scientific organizations that carry out public communication functions to disseminate information and scientific discourse to build public perception and knowledge of science and its benefits. At the same time, universities must improve their reputation through various communication and media activities.

Many universitas then set up dedicated PR units or broader strategic communications units. This encourages more comprehensive and intense PR or strategic communication practices by these science organizations. On the other hand, PR research has so far been dominated by cases in companies or government organizations (Huang et al., 2017). However, (Nutsugah & Anani-Bossman', 2023) study in the Ghanaian context found that educational institutions are a popular case of PR research besides the financial industry in the country. This article will examine the portrait or landscape of PR research with universities as cases or objects in leading PR and communication strategy journals. This is necessary to understand this topic and can help develop a future research agenda regarding public relations and science communication.

Many organizations, including higher education institutions, consider the PR function increasingly crucial due to changes in the increasingly complex communication environment after the second decade of this millennium. The existence of the digital world and the increasing diversity of communication channels means that various organizations face increasingly wider and varied audiences and increasingly complex communication problems. The relationship between organizations (including universities) and their publics differs significantly from the era before this information disruption when the contemporary public became very active and sensitive to what organizations were doing. But of course, the portrait of PR practices (scale and quality) at various universities varies, depending on internal and external factors.

Universities as educational institutions and scientific organizations have very different characteristics from other organizations. From a systems perspective, universities are a structural coupling between science and education systems (Sakai, 2024)). As a science organization, one of the university's main tasks is related to public understanding of science, which is more broadly related to science communication. On the one hand, universities, especially private universities, have "hybrid" characteristics as social institutions and business (corporate) entities. However, what are university PR practices like these days? Are they no different from PR practices in companies and government institutions? One of the efforts to answer this question can be started by reviewing PR research with universities as the object or the case in peer-reviewed journals. It is also helpful to know in more detail about the most popular approach choices, the more frequently used methods, and the findings that stand out in research on that topic. Identifying existing research gaps or gaps related to PR, universities, and communicating science is also the motive or aim of this article.

Public relations (PR) research has experienced significant growth in recent years (Volk, 2016; Thelen, 2021; Wang et al., 2021)), yet it continues to face the challenge of thoroughly examining its structural dynamics and evolutionary trajectory (Ki et al., 2021)). To advance the field, it is crucial to investigate various dimensions, including the flow of knowledge, the expansion of literature, theoretical advancements, and potential future directions. This exploration is essential not only in general terms but also within specific contexts, such as the intersection of PR and science communication (Wang et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021)).

In particular, the relationship between PR and higher education presents a unique opportunity to enrich the existing literature landscape. By mapping public relations research that focuses on university or higher education topics, this article aims to illuminate the distinctive characteristics and trends within this niche. Such mapping will help identify gaps in knowledge and highlight areas that require further exploration, ultimately contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how PR operates within academic settings. Additionally, it will shed light on the theoretical frameworks employed in this area, particularly how science communication principles are integrated into PR strategies used by universities. This investigation not only enhances the academic discourse surrounding PR but also provides practical insights for higher education institutions seeking to improve their communication practices in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.Public relations (PR) studies are evolving rapidly, with numerous researchers mapping the landscape of the field. Key contributions have come from scholars such as (Pasadeos et al., 2011; Ye & Ki, 2012) who have provided foundational insights into the discipline's development. More recent studies by (Meadows & Meadows, 2014; Duhé, 2015, and Volk, 2016) have further explored specific trends and challenges within PR. The work of (Xu & Huang, 2016; Wang et al., 2021, and Volk et al., 2023) highlights the increasing complexity of PR in response to evolving communication technologies and societal shifts. (Thelen, 2021; (Widianto et al., 2024)) have examined the implications of these changes, while ((Alhayat et al., 2024)) continue to push the boundaries of PR research. As a dynamic field, PR faces both practical and theoretical challenges stemming from internal organizational factors and external influences, including rapid

technological advancements and global social changes. These challenges necessitate ongoing research to adapt PR strategies effectively and address the unique demands of contemporary communication landscapes. Topics related to PR and digital technology have become one of the popular topics and have attracted a lot of attention among scholars recently (See Wang et al, 2021; Huang et al., 2017). According to Ye & Ki , 2012), there are three trends in PR research in the literature map, namely (a) citation analysis, (b) analysis of overall public relations research studies, and (c) analysis of a particular topic. Meanwhile, the findings of Zhou et al., 2023) show that 9 clusters developed in PR research throughout 2010-2020, namely strategic management being the most dominant cluster and the most popular cluster for interacting with other research traditions, public relations professionalism, digital media, crisis communication, global public relations, rhetoric and philosophy, media relations, and critical studies. What was then encouraged need for an "alternative" perspective in PR research, which was essential to pursue, as previously expressed by (Gowe, 2006).

Extensive research conducted by (Ki et al., 2021)) through bibliometric analysis of public relations publications from 1983 to 2019 shows how this field has evolved. The main finding is that the growth and popularity of global public relations in scholarship are steady. More remarkably, articles and citations have exploded since 2010 In a more specific aspect related to authorship, North American/western countries/global north scholars still dominate PR literature, as shown (Macnamara, 2016);, (Volk, 2016); (Volk, 2016), as well as (Wang et al., 2021)) In their research show that the important and most frequently referred authors in PR research are those who come from or are affiliated with institutions from Western countries. However, research by (Xu & Huang, 2016)) shows that PR articles in the Asian context published during 1994-2014 were still dominated by authors affiliated with Asian institutions (n = 86, 53.1%), followed by U.S. institutions (n = 69, 42.6%).

In research by (Jin et al., 2014), the three outstanding theories were excellence theory/symmetrical communication. Grunig's models of public relations practice, cultural/critical perspective, and organization-public relationship or relationship management. This aligns with (Gower, 2006)article, which shows that Two-way symmetrical communication is the dominant theoretical paradigm. Meanwhile, (Xu & Huang, 2016) found that there were seven most frequently used theories in public relations research in Asia between 1995 and 2014: four models of PR, framing, relationship management, the contingency theory of accommodation, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, situational crisis communication theory, and the excellence theory. Concerning social media, the dominant theories in PR research are dialogic theory, situational crisis communication theory, uses and gratifications, and excellence theory (Huang et al., 2017).

In the methodological aspect, research by Wang et al. (2021) regarding social media-related public relations research shows that the two most popular methods are surveys and content analysis. This is in line with the findings of (Khang et al., 2012)that content analysis and surveys are the most popular procedures. Meanwhile, (Khang et al., 2012) found that a quantitative methods approach dominates Asian PR research. The same portrait is also shown by research by (Jain et al.,2014; and Huang et al.., 2017). A different picture is demonstrated by a

study by Dong et al., 2023), that government public relations (GPR) research is dominated by qualitative research and also research by Meadows & Meadows III, 2014) which shows PR research in two leading journals, namely Journal of Public Relations Research and The Public Relations Review during the period 1975-2013 was dominated by qualitative research. Researchers also show mix-methods development in PR research as trends like this are developing more generally in the context of communication science and social science (Meadows & Meadows, 2014). The presence and increasingly widespread use of digital media or technology has also encouraged the development of PR research methodology ((Wang et al., 2021); (Xu & Huang, 2016)).

The general overview of the PR research map above shows that PR research is increasing. Still, there is dominance, or perhaps it could be called stagnation, at specific points in aspects of authorship, methods, and the theories/concepts used. So what about the special conditions of the PR research map in the case of universities and related to adaptive communication strategy? From the initial search that we carried out directly on publication databases and several leading journals, it seems that no research has systematically mapped the condition of PR research with cases or focuses on higher education institutions such as universities and in broader relation to science communication.

The field of public relations studies, particularly concerning university cases, is beginning to gain traction, as evidenced by recent findings in the Ghanaian context ((Anani-Bossman & Tella, 2022) However, a comprehensive examination on a global scale is essential to understand the broader implications and variations within this niche. It raises critical questions about whether the trends observed in PR research focused on universities align with or diverge from the general landscape of public relations scholarship. To explore this further, this article poses three key research questions.

RQ1 seeks to identify the general trends in research on public relations and university topics from 2010 to 2022 within prominent PR journals. This question aims to establish a timeline and contextual understanding of how university-related PR research has evolved over the years.

RQ2 focuses on the profile of authorship, including the backgrounds of researchers, the methodologies employed, and the specific topics, theories, and concepts that are prevalent in PR and university research. Understanding these elements will provide insight into the diversity and depth of scholarship in this area. RQ3 investigates the extent to which science communication is utilized as a framework in PR research for universities and higher education institutions. This is particularly relevant as universities increasingly engage with the public on scientific issues, necessitating a clear understanding of their communication strategies. Together, these questions aim to create a more nuanced portrait of public relations research in the context of higher education.

RESEARCH METHOD

To effectively map and understand a topic within the literature landscape, various methods can be employed, with systematic reviews being a prominent choice ((Victor, 2008) (Volk, 2016) (Xiao & Watson, 2019);

Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022). According to Xiao and Watson (2019), reviewing relevant literature allows for a comprehensive understanding of the existing body of work and helps identify research gaps. The systematic review method offers several advantages, notably its ability to provide a thorough and balanced overview of the current state of knowledge through a clear and transparent methodology. This article utilizes a systematic review to address specific research questions and achieve established objectives. To ensure rigor, the research process includes several stages: selecting appropriate journals, defining search keywords, determining the review period, categorizing literature types, collecting data, applying exclusion criteria, and conducting coding, extraction, and analysis.

The data or articles collected and analyzed come from public relations and strategic communication journals. Journal identification was done by searching the Scimago database and entering the keyword "public relations." With the keyword "public relations," 14 names of journals appeared, which were then filtered by looking at their aim and scope as well as their ranking (Q1 and Q2). Four journals were then selected to be data sources. Four journals were selected from the category/keyword "public relations," namely *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and *Public Relations Inquiry*.

We also included one leading journal in strategic communication, *the International Journal of Strategic Communication*, which publishes many public relations articles. The publication period for the articles collected is 2010-2022. This duration was chosen because, in this decade, the communication environment has become increasingly complex due to the increasingly intense and expansive digital world, bringing an increasingly strong influence on many things, including PR practices, higher education dynamics, and science communication. Apart from that, as stated by (Ihlen & Raknes, 2020)(Ki & Ye, 2017)), the number of articles and citations of PR has exploded since 2010.

Data collection was carried out by browsing the journal website pages mentioned above. Searches are carried out manually and automatically on the pages/websites of each journal. For this purpose, several keywords are used as a guide, namely "university," "higher education," and "college." In the initial stage, these keywords are entered into the search facility on the pages of each journal to see a general portrait. Next is a manual search for each edition of the publication using the keywords above as a guide to search for the title and abstract of the article. The types of publications collected are only research articles and exclude book reviews, editorials, policy discussions, and commentaries. In the *Public Relations Review*, data is also taken from the Research in Brief section and Full-Length Articles. Two researchers collected data to ensure minimal or no missed data or articles. The search results of the two researchers will be matched and rechecked against the journal source if there are differences. Articles related to public relations education or pedagogy in universities or higher education are not this article's object of study or analysis.

Data was coded and analyzed based on the following categories: general trend, authorship, method, topic, and theory/concept. General trends include describing the number of articles published yearly and by journal name. Furthermore, authorship consists of the author's name, affiliation, and region. Then, the method is coded based on the approach (qualitative, quantitative, mixed-method) and procedure (survey, interview, content analysis, experiment, focus group, case study, ethnography, etc.). Meanwhile, topics are identified deductively in each journal article by reviewing the title, keywords, and abstract. Theories identified in each piece can consist of a single theory or multiple theories. In addition, tracking the keyword "science communication" or anything relevant to this in the articles collected was also carried out to answer the third research question (RQ 3).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Science communication is a field that is considered increasingly important in the situation of contemporary society, which is facing various complex social problems, the threat of the climate crisis, the declining quality of democracy, phenomena such as the death of expertise and the spread of misinformation, and in general the broad impact of the development of digital technology ((Siregar et al., 2021)(Dunwoody, 2021); Orthia et al., 2021; Leßmöllmann, 2020). Science communication has several explanations from various perspectives and has experienced developments ranging from the deficit model to science communication in context ((Leßmöllmann, 2019); (Schäfer & Fähnrich, 2020)).

In an organizational context, particularly within universities, science communication plays a crucial role in promoting public understanding based on research activities and outputs (Schäfer & Fähnrich, 2020). The relationship between universities and the public can be framed within the context of public relations and science communication. (VanDyke & Lee, 2020)) note that these fields have evolved in ways that overlap and complement each other, highlighting the need for universities to build relationships with their internal and external publics. (Volk et al., 2023) suggest that public relations in scientific organizations should focus on managing trust, emphasizing the importance of cultivating confidence in the organization's scientific capabilities. Therefore, further exploration of the intersection between science communication and public relations in academic settings is essential to understand how these approaches are integrated in universities.

The concept of science communication is sometimes explained with terms such as "science popularisation," "public understanding," "vulgarization," "public understanding of science," and the cultivation of a "scientific temper" (Gascoigne & Leach, 2020). According to Burns et al. (2003), science communication may be defined as the use of appropriate skills, media, activities, and dialogue to communicate about scientific research to the public in order to produce one or more of the following: awareness, enjoyment, interest, opinions and/or understanding about science. Meanwhile, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine stated that science communication is more complex than simply translating the jargon of science into language the public understands.

If science communication is understood in an organizational context, which, according to (Dunwoody, 2021) is still insufficiently exposed and researched, then it will be related to the role of universities as one of the primary forms of science organization. Universities are responsible for communicating science or encouraging public understanding of science based on the research activities carried out and the outputs resulting from it.

The relationship between universities and the public can be understood in various conceptual and practical models. This relationship can be placed in the context of science communication and public relations in this article. This relationship can be placed in the context of science communication and public relations in this article. This means that the university's efforts to connect with its public for science communication purposes should ideally be discussed in a public relations frame. According to (VanDyke & Lee, 2020), public relations and science communication scholarship have evolved in ways that overlap, contrast, and complement. They then underline that as science becomes increasingly interdisciplinary, science public relations research should pay attention to this, for example, by investigating how organizations (e.g., universities) seek to build relationships with internal publics (e.g., faculties) in this regard.

Meanwhile, Borchelt & Nielsen (2008) show that the PR function for scientific organizations might usefully be thought of as managing the trust portfolio. They explained further that PR practices in science organizations are to cultivating or maintaining trust in the ability of the organization to do science, advocacy or science policy (Borchelt & Nielsen, 2008). Science communication and PR, especially in the context of science organizations or can be referred to as science public relations, need to be explored further ((Autzen & Weitkamp, 2019); (VanDyke & Lee, 2020)). To find out to what extent the science communication approach appears or is used in public relations research in the case of science organizations such as universities, the following research questions were formulated:

Previous studies have shown that PR research has developed in quantity and quality globally. More specific research regarding PR and universities or higher education institutions follow the same path, although the acceleration is far from the general picture of PR research, which is proliferating. The following table shows the number of university- or higher education-related public relations research articles in the four leading journals in this field from 2010 to 2022.

The data shows that Public Relations Review published the most articles on this topic (14 articles) and the least number of articles in the Journal of Public Relations Research (1 article). However, the articles in the Public Relations Review consist of two types: Research Article and Research in Brief. Twenty-one articles were published in these four journals during 2010-2022 Table 1 presents the number of articles published in four leading public relations journals during the 2010-2022 period. A portrait of the number of articles by year (Image 1) shows that the most articles were published in 2021 (7 articles),The data shows the overall trend in public relations research

output, as well as the specific number of articles focused on the context of universities or higher education institutions.

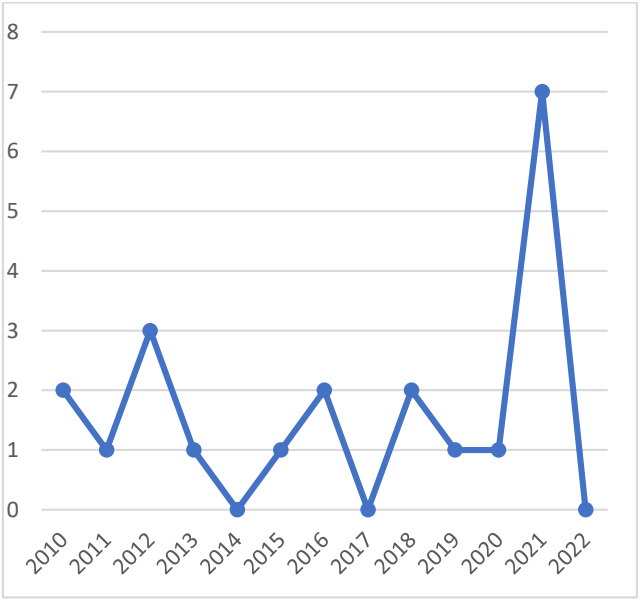
Table 1 Number of Articles in Four Journals for the 2010-2022

Journals	Total article	University PR- focus Journal
Public Relations Review	1,042	9
Journal of Public Relations Research	349	5
International Journal of Strategic Communication	239	3
Journal of Communication Management	205	4
Total	1,835	21

Source: Researchers' data, 2023

The data reveals that while the overall volume of public relations research published in these four journals increased substantially over the 12-year period, the number of articles specifically focused on the university or higher education context remained relatively low, accounting for only 21 out of the total 1,835 articles **(**Table 1).

This disparity suggests that the public relations research community has not given sufficient attention to understanding the unique communication dynamics and challenges faced by universities and other educational institutions, particularly in relation to the science communication framework. The limited representation of university-focused studies underscores the need for further exploration and expansion of this research area.

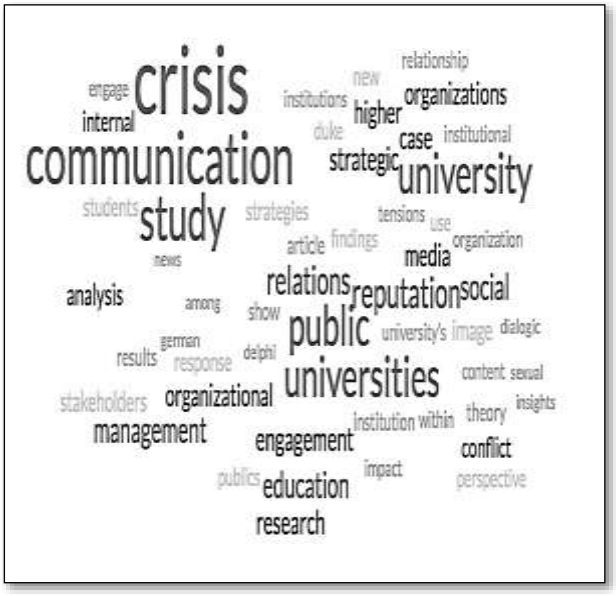


Source: Researchers' data, 2023

Figure 2 Number of articles by year 2010-2022

Most of the authors of the articles are from the USA or affiliated with universities in the USA. Apart from the USA, several authors come from Spain, Germany, Yemen, Australia, Egypt, Norway, and New Zealand. If looked at by region, no authors are affiliated with universities in South America, Central America, or Africa. Most articles were written in groups of two or more authors (13 articles); the rest were single authors. Meanwhile, there are only two articles where the authors' university affiliations come from different countries. The article "The Effect of Relationship Cultivation Strategies on Organizational Reputation in Conflict Zones: The Case of Yemeni Private Universities" was written by three scholars from Egypt, Yemen, and the USA (Figure 3).

Analysis of the titles and abstracts of the articles that have been collected shows that the topic of crisis is the primary concern, as shown in World Cloud. The context of the crisis studied in these articles is the "internal" crisis faced by the university and the "external" crisis that the institution responded to.



Source: Researchers' data, 2023

Figure 2 The Most Popular

The analysis of the text in the image reveals that it is a word cloud centered around the theme of "crisis communication" as it pertains to universities. The prominent terms include "crisis," "communication," "university," and "public," indicating their significance or frequency in the related text. Other notable words in the word cloud are "study," "institutional," "relations," "reputation," "engagement," and "research." (Figure 2)

The word cloud suggests a focus on how higher education institutions manage communication and their public image during crises. Additionally, smaller words scattered throughout the image hint at related themes and concepts such as "case," "media," "social," "analysis," "management," and "education." Word clouds are commonly used to summarize key themes or topics in a body of text, such as reports, articles, or research papers.

Table 2 Keywords Tracked in Title and Abstract

Keywords	Quantity
Crisis	49
Communication	36
Study	31
Public	26
University	26
Reputation	18
Relations	16
Management	14
Education	14

Source: Researchers' data, 2023

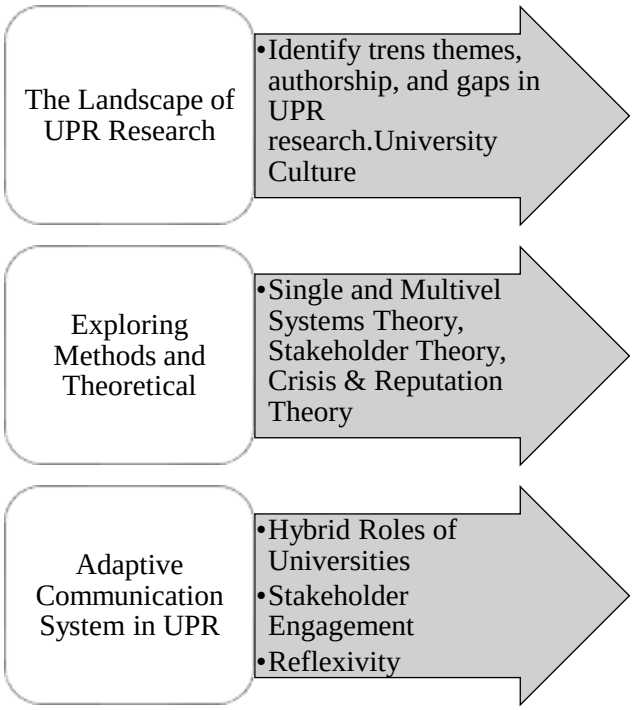
The two most prominent methods from the 21 articles are content analysis and case study, apart from survey, experimental, ethnography, and literature review or essay, which also appear as method choices (Table 2). Several studies using content analysis methods include those carried out by McAllister (2012), Linvill, McGee, & Hicks (2012). This method is divided into content analysis with quantitative and qualitative approaches. One of the methodologically exciting pieces is the article entitled New Insights into Crisis Communication from an "Inside" Emic Perspective During COVID-19 by Jim Macnamara (2021), which uses ethnography and auto ethnography.

In terms of theory and concepts, the most frequently used is crisis communication, including crisis management, apart from dialogic theory, strategic communication, Organizational reputation, Image Repair Strategies (IRT), Corporate social responsibility, and diffusion of innovations, which are used in a number of articles. Eight articles use crisis communication, including crisis management and its variations, as a theoretical framework or central concept. This result aligns with the topic of crisis, which is prominent, as previously mentioned. Meanwhile, a search for the keyword "science communication" carried out on the abstracts of 21 articles to answer RQ3 showed zero results, which means that almost all articles did not use this framework.

Public relations studies related to higher education have several contexts, including studies on the role of public relations in higher education, studies of the relationship between universities and their public, studies of how PR plays a role in conveying the specific code of higher education as a scientific development institution. This article has the idealism to encourage the position of PR in universities, which plays the role of communicating science in such a way that it follows the core code of universities as research and educational institutions. This article wants to see how Public Relations journals portray existing PR practices and to what extent this issue is raised. Higher education homework should have different functional differentiation than PR practices at other institutions with different functions.

Universities, as both educational institutions and scientific organizations, possess distinct characteristics that set them apart from other entities. From a systems perspective, universities serve as a structural coupling between the science and education systems (Sakai, 2023). One of their primary roles as scientific organizations is to enhance public understanding of science, closely tied to the broader field of science communication. Notably, universities—particularly private ones—exhibit "hybrid" traits, functioning simultaneously as social institutions and business entities.

This raises critical questions about contemporary university PR practices: Are they fundamentally different from those employed by corporate and governmental organizations? To address these questions, a thorough review of PR research focusing on universities in peer-reviewed journals is essential. This exploration should include an analysis of prevalent approaches, commonly used methodologies, and significant findings in the field. Identifying research gaps related to PR, universities, and science communication is a key objective of this article.



Source: Researchers' data, 2023

Figure 3 The Mapping UPR

The findings highlighted in the previous section indicate that the field of public relations (PR) studies, particularly concerning universities and higher education institutions, has not reached its full potential in terms of scholarly output. Analyzing the volume of published articles from 2010 to 2022 in four leading PR journals—Public Relations Review, Journal of Public Relations Research, Public Relations Inquiry, and International Journal of Strategic Communication—reveals a concerning lack of focus on this critical area. This gap is particularly ironic given the rapid global expansion and evolution of universities over the past few decades, during which effective PR strategies have become increasingly vital for these institutions.

As universities navigate complex challenges such as increased competition, the need for public accountability, and the demand for transparency, the role of PR becomes even more pronounced. Effective communication strategies are essential for building institutional reputation, engaging stakeholders, and disseminating research findings to broader audiences. Despite this necessity, the limited number of articles addressing PR within the context of higher education suggests a missed opportunity for scholars to contribute to a growing body of knowledge that could support universities in enhancing their communication practices.

Moreover, this underrepresentation in the literature raises questions about the theoretical frameworks and methodologies employed in PR research. It underscores the need for more targeted studies that explore the unique communication dynamics and challenges faced by higher education institutions, as well as the innovative PR strategies they can employ to adapt to an ever-changing global landscape. Addressing this gap will not only

enrich the academic discourse but also provide practical insights that can help universities effectively leverage PR to achieve their goals.

The findings presented confirm several portraits or findings from previous studies regarding topic, method, and theory, although they are somewhat different **(Figure 3.**). The dominance of US scholars is in line with findings in the context of public relations studies in general by Macnamara, 2012; Volk. 2016; Ki, Pasadeos, & Ertem-Eray, 2021; Page & Capizzo, 2021; and Wang, Ceng, & Sun, 2021). At this point, efforts to enrich PR studies with the case of universities or higher education institutions need to be made by encouraging publications from scholars from other regions, such as Africa, Asia, and South America, for example, through special editions.

The dynamics of PR from universities or higher education institutions in these countries with different social and educational backgrounds will provide diverse and valuable perspectives for developing this discipline, both practically and academically. The fact that crisis is the primary concern of scholars in this topic or study shows findings that align with research by (Zhou, 2019)) that 9 clusters developed in PR research throughout 2010-2020, one of which is crisis communication. This finding is also identical to the study by Míguez-González, Baamonde-Silva, and Corbacho-Valencia 2014) in a specific context in Spain, which shows that crisis communication is a popular theme among PR researchers in that country.

According to (Martin W. Bauer and & Bucchi, 2015)taking a broader approach to PR may also be useful rather than thinking of it as something that one unit in an organization does. In other words, PR studies need to be pushed from studies at the messo or organizational level to the macro level. The systems approach applied in PR studies is seen in Susanne Hölmstrom's article entitled Niklas Luhmann: Contingency, risk, trust and reflection. In this article, the author conveys two critical main ideas. First, Luhmann's autopoietic system theory enables the identification of frames for understanding public relations in interrelation with society's overall coordination processes. Second, Luhmann's theory and analysis are central to public relations research and practice, given that public relations as a social practice is embedded in conflicts of legitimacy ((Holmström, 2007); (Cross, 2002)).

Hölmstrong uses the core concept of Luhmann's autopoietic system theory, namely "observation," to describe PR as a referential system. She highlights two fundamental values: the orientation of self-reflection and inter-systemic relations in modern society through "reflexivity" and "reflection." According to him, reflexivity implies a monocontextual, narcissistic perspective from within, from where the organization takes its own worldview for given, takes what it sees to be the one reality, the only truth – and consequently conflicts blindly with different worldviews (Hölmstrong, 2007). Meanwhile, In reflection, the perspective rises to a higher level, facilitating a poly-contextual worldview. In Hölmström's study, public relations is placed in the context of the horizontal logic of modern society, acting as a system that is imagined to be able to represent the specific "public" interests of a particular social system with diverse actors from a specific environment. Public relations can be a

unit that guarantees the value of temporal sustainability or sharpens the value of responsibility, a significant value that must be realized in modern society in inter-systemic relations.

More specifically, studying public relations at universities or higher education institutions also allows us to see and understand the relationship between public relations as a specific system and science as a system. Science itself can be understood as “the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence” (VanDyke & Lee, 2020; Oeppen Hill, 2020) In Luhmann's system logic, science is a functionally differentiated subsystem of modern society that uses the communication medium (truth) for its own reproduction and to construct and obtain new knowledge ((Baraldi & Gavioli, 2021)

The scientific system works by distinguishing between true and untrue, theoretically and methodologically. Higher education is an institution that represents institutional science, so when PR becomes part of this institution, it should become part of the value of developing science. Functional differentiation in PR work should provide a unique color to the system so that the main characteristics of the system are still reflected in PR work Exploration of the position of public relations as a system within the university system and its relationship to the science system requires a broader scope than can be provided in this article. Exploration of the position of PR as a system within the university system and related to the scientific system requires a broader space than this article.

In examining the theoretical frameworks and concepts related to adaptive communication within university public relations systems, crisis communication—particularly crisis management—emerges as the most frequently utilized framework. This is alongside other theories such as dialogic theory, strategic communication, organizational reputation, image repair strategies (IRT), corporate social responsibility, and the diffusion of innovations, all of which appear in several articles. Notably, eight articles specifically employ crisis communication, including its various forms, as a central theoretical framework.

This finding underscores the prominence of crisis-related topics in the literature. In contrast, a search for the keyword "science communication" in the abstracts of the 21 articles revealed that nearly all of them did not incorporate this framework, indicating a significant gap in the application of science communication within university public relations research.

A comprehensive review study should not only advance theoretical frameworks but also offer practical insights for practitioners in the field of public relations ((Eriksson, 2018); (Wang et al., 2021)). This article underscores the limitations of existing research on PR's role in science communication, while highlighting its substantial potential for theoretical development. Investigating PR practices in higher education provides a unique opportunity to explore how distinct organizational characteristics can contribute to a more nuanced theoretical understanding of adaptive system communication.

This study emphasizes the functional differentiation of PR roles across diverse contexts, yielding valuable insights for practitioners navigating these complexities. It advocates for the ongoing evolution of PR research, encouraging scholars to transcend prevailing paradigms. The intricacies of modern society demand a systemic approach to comprehend the dynamic relationships between organizations and their environments.

CONCLUSION

Public relations studies in the context of higher education encompass various dimensions, including the role of PR in universities, the relationship between institutions and their publics, and the function of PR in communicating the core values of higher education as centers of scientific advancement. This article aims to elevate the significance of PR within universities, emphasizing its crucial role in effectively communicating scientific knowledge while adhering to the fundamental principles of research and education. Furthermore, it seeks to examine how leading public relations journals depict current PR practices in higher education and the extent to which these issues are addressed. It is essential to recognize that the functional differentiation of PR in higher education should differ from practices in other sectors, reflecting the unique responsibilities and goals of academic institutions. By highlighting these distinctions, this article contributes to a deeper understanding of how PR can be strategically employed to enhance the mission of universities as vital contributors to knowledge and societal development.

The systematic review presented several limitations that should be acknowledged when interpreting its findings. While the scope of the review provided a comprehensive overview of adaptive communication research in university public relations from 2010 to 2022, it may have overlooked relevant studies published before this period or in other related fields. Additionally, the review was limited to only English-language publications, potentially excluding valuable research conducted in other languages and restricting the generalizability of the results to non-English speaking contexts. The reliance on a select number of academic databases, despite their reputation, may have resulted in the exclusion of studies published in other outlets. Furthermore, the subjective nature of the screening and coding processes, although guided by a standardized protocol, could have been influenced by the researchers' own biases and perspectives.

The heterogeneous nature of the included studies, in terms of their methodologies, research settings, and specific aspects of adaptive communication examined, made it challenging to draw definitive conclusions and generalize the findings across different university public relations contexts. The review also lacked an in-depth analysis that could have provided richer insights into the nuances and complexities of the various adaptive communication strategies and their effectiveness.

Finally, given the rapidly evolving nature of public relations and university public relations, the landscape of adaptive communication practices and research may have changed or expanded since the latest studies included

in the review. These limitations should be carefully considered when interpreting the findings of the systematic review and when designing future research in this area.

Articles related to public relations education or pedagogy in universities or higher education institutions are not the object of study or analysis in this article. Another related limitation is that this article does not include some research related to PR in the case of research organizations such as Research Centers, which also need to be reviewed concerning the communicative function of science. Future research may be able to do this to fill various gaps in this article. In addition, bibliometric analysis could be used to expand the explanatory reach of this article.

Despite these limitations, this article underscores the significance of integrating public relations with broader social science theories. Establishing this connection is crucial for advancing public relations theory in the future. By adopting a more inclusive approach, researchers can cultivate a robust perspective that enhances our understanding of public relations as it increasingly influences modern, intersystemic society.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, A.M and H.I.; methodology, A.M.; software, A.M.; validation, AM.. formal analysis, AM.; investigation, A.M.; resources, A.M.; data curation, A.M.; writing—original draft preparation, A.M.; writing—review and editing, A.M.; visualization, H.I.; supervision, AM.; project administration, A.M.; funding acquisition, all authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript."

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[PRH] Editor Decision

1 message

redaksi profesihumas <profesihumas@gmail.com> Thu, Jun 12, 2025 at 10:35 AM
To: Majid Abd Majid <abd.majid@umi.ac.id>

Dear Abd Majid
Author of Journal PRofesi Humas

We have reached a decision regarding your submission to PRofesi Humas, "A Systematic Review of Adaptive Communication Strategies in University Public Relations: Insights from 2010 to 2022".

Our decision is to: Article Accepted

Editorial PRofesi Humas
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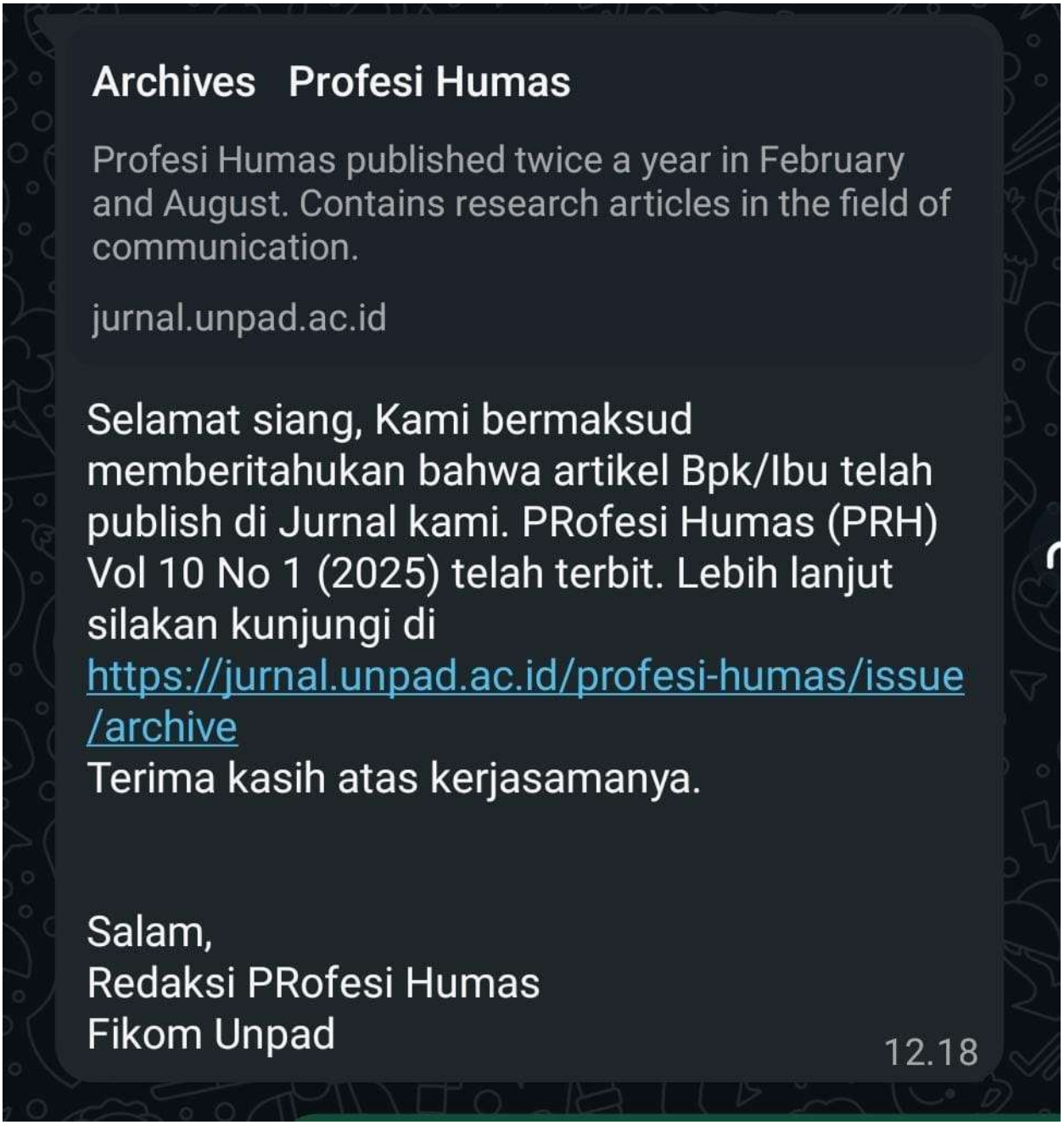
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