



THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON CONSUMER TRUST IN ALLIANCE FRANCAISE MEDAN THROUGH CONSUMER SATISFACTION AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE

Tengku Maura Safa Ramadhanti¹, Muhammad AlFikri²

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: tengku0603222103@uinsu.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program is a strategic policy to ensure equitable access to health services, but its effective implementation still faces communication challenges, particularly the low public understanding of the benefits, procedures, and mechanisms of the service. This study aims to analyze the persuasive communication strategy of the Public Relations of the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office in designing and delivering UHC socialization messages. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data were analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results show that the public relations implemented a persuasive strategy through simplifying technical messages, using rational and emotional approaches, utilizing face-to-face communication and digital media, and adapting language to the socio-cultural characteristics of the community. These strategies contributed to increasing public understanding and trust in the UHC program, despite still being hampered by health literacy, access to information, and misinformation. The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on the persuasive message design patterns of local government public relations in public health communications. These findings provide practical contributions for government agencies in designing UHC communications that are more adaptive, inclusive, and based on community needs.

Keywords: *persuasive communication; government public relations; Universal Health Coverage; health communication; message design.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a global health development agenda that emphasizes that everyone should have access to quality health services without experiencing financial hardship. The World Health Organization explains that UHC encompasses the entire range of essential health services, from health promotion and prevention to treatment and rehabilitation to palliative care, according to community

needs (World Health Organization, 2025). This agenda also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically target 3.8, which emphasizes financial risk protection, access to quality essential health services, and the availability of safe, effective, and affordable medicines and vaccines for all (United Nations, 2024). In the Indonesian context, UHC implementation is realized through the National Health Insurance-Indonesian Health Card (JKN-KIS) Program, administered by BPJS Kesehatan (Social Security Agency for Health), as a state instrument to expand access to health services and social protection for the community (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020).

However, the success of UHC is not solely determined by the availability of a healthcare system, coverage, or regulatory support, but is also significantly influenced by the effectiveness of government public communication. A large-scale health program like UHC encompasses quite complex information, encompassing registration mechanisms, participant rights, referral procedures, types of covered services, and community administrative obligations. This complexity can create gaps in understanding if not conveyed through simple, persuasive communication strategies that are tailored to the community's social characteristics. From a health communication perspective, effective public messages must not only be informative but also build public understanding, trust, and willingness to utilize healthcare services appropriately (Schiavo, 2014; Kreps, 2017).

At the regional level, the challenge of UHC communication becomes increasingly important because communities have diverse social, economic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. North Sumatra Province, as a heterogeneous region, faces challenges in ensuring that information about UHC is understandable to various community groups, including urban and rural communities, low-educated groups, and those with limited access to digital information. In these circumstances, the Public Relations Department of the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office plays a strategic role as a liaison between the government and the community. Public relations functions not only to convey information but also to design messages, select communication media, adapt language, and build public trust in government health programs. This role aligns with the concept of public relations as a managerial communication function tasked with building mutual understanding between an organization and its publics (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2013).

Persuasive communication is a relevant approach in UHC socialization because it aims to voluntarily influence public knowledge, attitudes, and behavior through rational, emotional, and credible messages. In the context of health program socialization, persuasive communication can be implemented through simplifying technical terms, using concrete examples, utilizing testimonials, a family-like approach, and selecting communicators trusted by the public. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) explain that the effectiveness of persuasion is influenced by how the audience processes the message, whether through a central channel emphasizing rational argumentation or a peripheral channel influenced by the source's credibility, emotional closeness, and the message's appeal. Therefore, the success of UHC socialization depends not only on the completeness of the information but also on the public relations team's ability to craft messages relevant to the community's needs, experiences, and literacy levels.

Several previous studies have discussed health communication, government program socialization strategies, and the role of public relations in conveying public information.

However, most studies still view communication as a general information dissemination activity, without specifically examining how persuasive messages are designed by local government public relations officers in the context of UHC socialization. Previous research has also focused more on specific health campaigns, such as COVID-19 prevention, stunting, immunization, or healthy lifestyles, while studies on persuasive communication within the UHC program are relatively limited. This gap is important to examine because UHC is not merely an administrative program, but rather a public health policy program that requires ongoing public understanding, trust, and participation. Therefore, focusing on designing persuasive messages is a crucial contribution to strengthening public communication and health communication studies at the regional level.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the persuasive communication strategy of the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office's Public Relations in socializing the Universal Health Coverage program. Specifically, this study seeks to explain how public relations officers design messages, select communication approaches, use media, and adapt messages to community characteristics. The novelty of this research lies in its emphasis on persuasive message design patterns in local government public relations practices, particularly in UHC socialization. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of persuasive communication, public relations, and health communication. Practically, the results of this study can serve as evaluation material for government agencies in designing more adaptive, inclusive health communication strategies, oriented toward increasing literacy and public trust in the UHC program.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of the persuasive communication strategies employed by the Public Relations of the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office in promoting the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on the process, meaning, experiences, and communication practices of public relations personnel, rather than on statistical measurements. The study was conducted at the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office, focusing on UHC outreach activities for the community. Research informants were selected purposively, based on their direct involvement and knowledge of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of UHC outreach communication. Informants included public relations personnel, UHC/JKN program managers, outreach officers, and community representatives receiving information. Purposive selection of informants is relevant in qualitative research because it allows researchers to obtain rich, in-depth data that aligns with the research objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were semi-structured using an interview guide that addressed several key aspects: persuasive message planning, information simplification techniques, communication media selection, communication barriers, and community response to UHC outreach. Observations were conducted by observing public relations communication activities, both in-person and through digital media, including message delivery, interactions between communicators and audiences, and public response during outreach activities. Documentation was used to examine supporting materials such as outreach materials, posters, social media posts, activity reports, minutes, activity photos,

and policy documents related to UHC. The use of these three data collection techniques was intended to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied and strengthen the credibility of the data (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive analysis model that encompassed data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During the reduction stage, interview, observation, and documentation data were selected and categorized based on key themes, such as message strategy, persuasive approach, communication media, barriers, and public response. The data was then presented in the form of a thematic narrative to demonstrate the relationship between public relations communication strategies and the effectiveness of UHC outreach. Data validity was maintained through source and technical triangulation, comparing information from public relations, program officers, outreach documents, and community responses. Furthermore, researchers double-checked the consistency of field data with interpretations to ensure more credible and accountable findings. This process is crucial in qualitative research because validity is determined not only by the quantity of data but also by the consistency, depth, and interconnectedness of data sources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The Role of Public Relations in UHC Socialization

Research results indicate that the Public Relations of the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office acts as a communication liaison between the government and the public in the socialization of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program. This role is not only administrative but also strategic, as public relations is responsible for translating technical information regarding UHC into simpler, clearer, and more easily understood messages. One informant from the public relations department stated, "If UHC information is conveyed simply using regulatory language, the public is often confused. So our job is to simplify the language, for example, by explaining the benefits, how to register, and what services the public can use." This quote demonstrates the role of public relations as a communication facilitator, bridging the language of policy with the language of the public. From a public relations perspective, the function of public relations is not only to disseminate information but also to build a shared understanding between an organization and its public (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2013).

In addition to conveying information, public relations also plays a role in building public trust in the UHC program. Trust is crucial because public health programs often encounter public doubts, particularly regarding procedures, costs, and service benefits. Another informant explained, "People sometimes ask whether it's really free, whether they'll still be served, or whether there's an additional fee. We have to explain things slowly so they believe this program is truly about helping the community." This finding demonstrates that public relations communication is not merely informative; it must also be persuasive and convincing. This aligns with Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) view that persuasion works through the delivery of rational arguments while simultaneously using emotional cues and source credibility to influence audience attitudes.

The role of public relations in UHC socialization is also evident in its ability to adapt messages to community characteristics. In the context of North Sumatra, with its diverse

social, cultural, educational, and access to information context, UHC messages cannot be delivered with a uniform approach. One informant stated, "When we reach rural communities, we often use simple language, sometimes with the help of community leaders or village officials. For young people, information is more easily conveyed through social media or concise visual designs." This statement demonstrates that public relations performs the function of adapting messages based on audience segmentation. In health communication, effective messages must consider the social, cultural, linguistic, and literacy contexts of the audience to ensure that health information is received and understood appropriately (Schiavo, 2014).

Interpretatively, these findings confirm that public relations plays a role as a mediator between health policy structures and the public's experience as service recipients. UHC information is primarily institutional and technical, but the public requires explanations that are closely aligned with their practical needs. Therefore, public relations must be able to transform policy messages into messages that are communicative, relevant, and address the public's immediate interests. In public communication theory, the success of government communication is largely determined by the institution's ability to establish two-way communication, listen to public responses, and adapt communication strategies based on public needs (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Therefore, the role of public relations is not merely as a "mouthpiece for information," but as a strategic actor that manages meaning, builds legitimacy, and strengthens relationships of trust between the government and citizens.

Therefore, the role of public relations in UHC socialization can be understood as multidimensional, encompassing informative, educational, persuasive, and relational functions. Public relations helps the public understand health care rights and procedures, reduces confusion regarding technical information, and builds confidence that UHC is an accessible and usable program. These findings reinforce the argument that the success of UHC depends not only on policy and service aspects, but also on the quality of government communication with the public. Therefore, strengthening public relations capacity in designing persuasive messages, understanding audience characteristics, and managing two-way communication is crucial to increasing the effectiveness of public health program outreach.

Public Relations' Persuasive Communication Strategy to Increase Public Response

The research results indicate that persuasive communication conducted by the Public Relations Department of the Health Office in promoting the UHC program plays a strategic role in increasing public understanding and participation. This finding can be analyzed through the perspective of persuasive communication theory, which emphasizes the importance of message development, media selection, and audience characteristics in determining communication effectiveness. Persuasive communication aims to influence attitudes, opinions, and behavior through systematically crafted messages delivered using an appropriate approach (Noor et al., 2025). In the context of this research, public relations implemented this principle by simplifying UHC information and emphasizing tangible benefits to the public.

The persuasive communication strategy employed by public relations was both educational and adaptive. Messages were delivered by emphasizing the direct benefits of the UHC program, such as easier access to health services, and reinforced with community

testimonials (Norkhair & Akhmad, 2025). Furthermore, complex technical information was simplified for easier understanding.

Table 1.1
Persuasive Communication Strategy Implemented by the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office

No	Aspect	Result
1	Approach	Educational and persuasive
2	Message Content	Emphasizes the direct benefits of UHC
3	Techniques	Testimonials, simplification of information
4	Audience Adaptation	Local languages (rural areas), digital media (younger generation)

Source: Results of Interview with Public Relations of North Sumatra Provincial Health Office

These findings indicate that public relations has implemented persuasive communication principles by combining rational (logical) and emotional approaches. This is reinforced by findings from public relations staff who stated that they used real-life examples and emotional approaches related to family health to enhance the appeal of their messages.

In implementing outreach, public relations staff used various communication media tailored to the characteristics of the community. Face-to-face methods were considered the most effective because they allowed for direct interaction and real-time clarification of information. However, digital media was also beginning to be utilized to reach the younger generation and those who were active online. These findings indicate that media use was combined (multichannel communication), aiming to reach various segments of the community broadly.

The research results showed that public response to UHC outreach tended to be positive, but not evenly distributed. Some people demonstrated a good understanding, while others remained confused, particularly regarding registration procedures, costs, and the types of services covered.

Public relations staff stated that the success of communication was greatly influenced by the approach used. A family-oriented approach, the use of local languages, and direct interaction proved more effective in increasing public understanding. This suggests that cultural aspects and social proximity are important factors in persuasive communication at the local level.

Coordination and Message Development

Research results indicate that coordination between public relations and program officers is a crucial step in developing Universal Health Coverage (UHC) socialization messages. Coordination is carried out to ensure that the information conveyed to the public remains substantively accurate but easily understood. One informant stated, "Before the socialization, we usually coordinate with the program department. They explain the rules and technical aspects of UHC, and then public relations helps translate them into simpler language so that the public doesn't misunderstand." This quote indicates that socialization messages are not developed spontaneously, but through an

internal process involving the exchange of information between technical and communication personnel. From a public relations perspective, internal coordination is necessary for organizations to deliver messages that are consistent, credible, and aligned with public needs (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2013).

The message development process involves filtering technical information, selecting the most important points, and then formulating them in communicative language. Information such as registration mechanisms, service benefits, referral procedures, and UHC participant rights is chosen as the main topic because it is the most frequently asked question by the public. Another informant explained, "We don't use all the technical terms. The most important thing is that people know the benefits, how to access services, and what to bring when seeking treatment." This finding demonstrates that message development is carried out through the principles of selection, simplification, and adjustment. Theoretically, this aligns with the concept of health communication, which emphasizes the importance of clear, relevant, and audience-oriented messages so that health information can be understood and used in decision-making (Schiavo, 2014).

In addition to simplifying content, coordination also serves to maintain message consistency among outreach providers. Disagreements between staff can lead to information distortion, especially when the public receives differing explanations from different sources. One informant stated, "Sometimes people are confused because they've received different information. Therefore, before going into the field, we first agree on the key points so that the answers given don't change." This quote demonstrates that internal coordination serves as a control mechanism for message accuracy. In organizational theory, good internal communication functions to reduce uncertainty, align the actions of organizational members, and prevent the emergence of inconsistent messages to the public (Miller, 2015).

Interpretatively, these findings confirm that UHC messaging is a strategic process that connects policy logic with public acceptance. On the one hand, the government must maintain accurate information because UHC is related to health care regulations. On the other hand, the public requires messages that are simple, practical, and relevant to everyday experiences. Therefore, public relations plays a role as both a policy translator and a persuasive message designer. Within the Elaboration Likelihood Model framework, rationally structured messages that explain benefits and procedures can influence audiences through the central channel, while the use of simple language, concrete examples, and the communicator's familiarity can strengthen message acceptance through the peripheral channel (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Thus, message coordination and development are crucial foundations for the effectiveness of UHC socialization. Research findings demonstrate that communication success is determined not only by the media used but also by the quality of the internal processes before the message is delivered to the public. Good coordination enables public relations to craft messages that are accurate, simple, consistent, and tailored to audience characteristics. This reinforces the argument that public communication in health programs must be systematically designed, not simply delivered in an informative manner. Therefore, strengthening coordination between public relations, program officers, and field implementers needs to be part of the government's health communication strategy so that UHC socialization can increase public understanding, trust, and participation.

The Perspective of Islamic Values in Public Relations' Persuasive Communication in UHC Program Socialization

Persuasive communication in the socialization of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program can be understood not only through a communication science approach, but also through the perspective of Islamic values, which emphasize ethics, honesty, and responsibility in conveying information. In Islam, communication aims to convey goodness and provide benefits to society (Nasoha et al., 2025). This aligns with the role of public relations in this study, namely conveying UHC information so that the public understands the benefits, rights, and procedures of health services accurately.

One of the important principles of Islamic communication is *qaulan sadidan* (truthful speech), as stated by Allah in Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 70:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

Meaning: "O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak truthfully."

This principle emphasizes that all information conveyed must be honest, accurate, and accountable. In the context of this research, public relations has strived to maintain information accuracy through coordination with program officers, the use of official guidelines, and the simplification of messages to avoid misunderstandings among the public.

Furthermore, the value of honesty in communication is also reflected in public relations' efforts to convey information transparently and easily understood. The use of simple language, a direct approach to the public, and adapting messages to socio-cultural conditions demonstrate that public relations focuses not only on conveying information but also on ensuring that the message is well received. This is important because one of the problems in the research proposal is the low level of public understanding due to the complexity of UHC information.

Thus, the persuasive communication used by public relations in UHC socialization reflects Islamic values, particularly in the aspects of honesty and responsibility. The application of these values not only increases communication effectiveness but also strengthens public trust in government programs. Therefore, the integration of Islamic values in public communication is important to create communication that is not only effective, but also ethical and oriented towards the welfare of society.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that persuasive communication conducted by the Public Relations of the North Sumatra Provincial Health Office in the socialization of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program has a significant role in increasing public understanding and participation, especially through message simplification strategies, the use of emotional and rational approaches, and the selection of communication media that are adaptive to audience characteristics. These findings indicate that communication effectiveness is not only determined by the content of the message, but also by the ability of public relations to adapt language, media, and approaches to the social and cultural

conditions of the community, thus providing a deeper understanding of persuasive communication practices in the context of public health policy. Theoretically, the results of this study strengthen the concept of persuasive communication and public relations as strategic instruments in building public awareness and behavior change, while complementing previous research by emphasizing the importance of designing contextual messages at the regional level. Practically, these findings have implications for government agencies in designing more effective, inclusive, and sustainable communication strategies, particularly in improving public health literacy. However, this study has limitations in the number and variety of informants and a more dominant focus on the communicator's perspective, so it does not fully represent the experience of the community as message recipients; Therefore, further research is recommended to involve more participants from various backgrounds and combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a more comprehensive and in-depth picture of the effectiveness of persuasive communication in health programs.

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