**Jurnal Manajemen Komunikasi,** Volume 11, No. 1, October 2026, page 132-151
https://doi.org/10.24198/jmk.v11i1.71460

# Organizational communication strategy of Bahana Inspirasi Muda in recruiting talent for Japan

**Qurratu Aini Salma Adzkia[1], Aang Koswara[2], Nuryah Asri Sjafirah[3], Yanti Setianti[4]**
[1,2,3,4]Faculty of Communication Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Many young Indonesians want to work in Japan, and job training institutions (LPK) prepare them before departure. Fraud cases involving illegal placement agencies make the public wary, so a legitimate institution has to earn trust through its communication. Bahana Inspirasi Muda (BIM), an LPK in Bandung that trains and places healthcare professionals, enrolls only about 30 participants per batch. **Purpose:** This study analyzes how BIM carries out organizational communication to recruit prospective participants for Japan's labor market. **Methods:** This study employs a qualitative approach. Data were collected through online observation of BIM's social media, analysis of digital documents, and interviews with three informants. The data were analyzed using Miles's interactive model, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. **Results:** BIM communicates mainly through routine social media promotion that attracts little response. Several stages BIM carries out, such as identifying its target group and choosing media, align with the planning stages of Assifi and French, while objective setting, message development, and evaluation remain weak. The triangulation of observation, documents, and interviews reveals a three-layered gap in information, channels, and narrative. Personal contact through *Sensei* and alumni is a strength that has not yet been turned into communication content. **Conclusion:** BIM's issue with recruitment comes down to how the organization communicates and builds trust. The quality of the programs themselves is not the problem. The institution has the capability, the care, and a proven track record that could earn trust. It hasn't shown this to the people it needs to attract. **Implications:** The study shows that the training institutions with legitimacy need to mix mediated communication with an intentional personal approach. It also gives a framework that other institutions can apply. Future research should test the communication program that is suggested.

**Keywords:** organizational communication; communication strategy; talent recruitment; trust; social media

**To cite this article (APA Style):**
Adzkia, Q. A. S., Koswara, A., Sjafirah, N. A., & Setianti, Y. (2026). Organizational communication strategy of Bahana Inspirasi Muda in recruiting talent for Japan. *Jurnal Manajemen Komunikasi*, *11*(1), 132-151. https://doi.org/10.24198/jmk.v11i1.71460

**Correspondence:** Qurratu Aini Salma Adzkia, S.I.Kom. Universitas Padjadjaran. Jl. Raya Bandung Sumedang KM.21, Hegarmanah, Kec. Jatinangor, Kabupaten Sumedang, Jawa Barat 45363, Indonesia. *Email*: salmaadzkia18@gmail.com

**Submitted:** 2 July 2026, **Revised:** 20 October 2026, **Accepted:** 31 October 2026, **Published:** 31 October 2026

ISSN: 2548-3242 (printed), ISSN: 2549-0079 (online). Website: http://jurnal.unpad.ac.id/manajemen-komunikasi
Copyright © 2026 Author(s). This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-SA license

## INTRODUCTION

Interest in working in Japan continues to grow among Indonesians and a network of job training institutions, *Lembaga Pelatihan Kerja*, abbreviated LPK, has developed around this interest. Japan still faces a shortage of workers, especially in caregiving. The Bandung City Manpower Office supports language training for residents who will go to Japan, providing subsidies for those training programs. Candidates typically spend about six months, and sometimes up to ten months, in an LPK before they depart. During this time, they learn the language, work habits, and physical stamina that Japanese workplaces expect. This preparation is not a formality. Prospective trainees tend to feel hope and anxiety at the same time as they approach life and work in Japan (Ariyanto et al., 2026), and a good institution is one of the few things that can ease the second feeling.

Bahana Inspirasi Muda (BIM) is one of the LPK in Bandung. It trains and places healthcare professionals in Japan, and it has operated for more than a decade (Bahana Inspirasi Muda, 2025, 2026). Its main program stands on four pillars: mental, character, cultural, and professional skills development. BIM is one of three LPK, together with LPK Hikari Senseiko and LPK UHM, that cooperate with the Bandung City Manpower Office in the subsidized training scheme.

Other institutions provide a useful point of comparison. LPK Sakura in Purwodadi, Grobogan, was founded in 2017 and has sent more than 500 participants to Japan through various sending organizations, even though it works at the district level with limited resources (Rifai & Fakhruddin, 2025). Most of its trainees are senior high or vocational school graduates aged 18 to 25 whose main motive is to improve their family's income. LPK Kamisora, studied by Ariyanto et al. (2026), serves prospective apprentices who carry both expectations and fears about working life in Japan. In Bandung, Burhanudin (2026) quotes a participant in the same scheme as saying that other LPK, BIM among them, also concentrate on caregiving (*kaigo*) and that training policies differ from one LPK to the next. Compared with LPK Sakura, BIM recruits from a narrower and more specialized group, healthcare graduates, and it has a longer record of alumni to point to.

The existence of institutions like BIM is open to debate, and the debate is not unfounded. Fraud in the name of overseas placement is a real problem. In 2026, for example, the police in West Nusa Tenggara named the manager of an allegedly illegal LPK as a suspect in a human trafficking case after at least six candidates, who had been promised farm work in Japan, were

moved from one shelter to another and never deployed (iNews, 2026). Cases like this make many families suspicious of any LPK that asks for money, time and trust before a young person boards a plane. So the need for pre-departure institutions has not disappeared. Candidates must learn Japanese, adapt to Japanese work culture and become physically ready, and this takes months. A legitimate institution cannot simply be written off, it must earn its place by showing, through its communication, that is real, accountable, and different from others.

How well an organization performs depends heavily on how it communicates. Institutions that train people are no exception. Information moves quickly these days. Most people spend time on social media, so a good program doesn't just sell itself. It has to be seen by the people it is meant for. That is where brand awareness becomes important. Recognition comes first, and trust and engagement tend to follow. An organization that the public already knows has an easier time getting attention when many others also compete for it. Rotok et al. (2025) illustrate the risk with a product that was known nationwide but still struggled to attract attention because its promotion was poorly organized. Awareness might fade when communication stops (Rotok et al., 2025).

Digital technology has changed how organizations connect with the people they serve. Social media gives them a way to reach more people than a newspaper or television ever could, because of this communication is no longer just about sharing facts. Organizations now use it to control how they are seen to build a reputation, and to maintain relationships with customers, partners, or even the public. Susanti et al. (2023) describe marketing communication strategy along these lines, as a process that shapes public perception, strengthens relationships with stakeholders, and creates value for long-term success. Supit (2025) describes marketing communication as the link between what an organization offers and how people respond to it (Supit, 2025; Susanti et al., 2023).

One of the primary objectives of strategic communication is to build brand awareness. According to Kotler (2002), brand awareness means that people can identify, recognize and recall a brand when presented with a specific product or service category. In an organizational context, brand awareness is not only about people knowing the company's name but also understanding the values, programs, and benefits it offers. A high level of brand awareness increases the organization's chances of being considered by the public when they are making decisions, including the decision to participate in a program or even to use the services provided (Kotler, 2002). The emphasis on messaging also resonates with studies of

Marketing Public Relations in Indonesia, which highlight the importance of context-sensitive messaging when tailoring communication to local audience characteristics (Dwiprakasa et al., 2025).

Brand awareness is increasingly important in the digital communication landscape. Studies have shown that social media is important for increasing an organization's visibility and building brand awareness. Khairunnisa and Juliadi (2023) stated that a social media marketing strategy that begins with a situational analysis and a SWOT analysis can assist organizations in developing more effective communication strategies for raising brand awareness. The findings show that understanding an organization's internal and external conditions is an important foundation for developing specific communication strategies (Khairunnisa & Juliadi, 2023).

Amid these developments, the communication challenges faced by human resource development institutions differ from those faced by ordinary business organizations. Companies market intangibles such as improved competencies, character development, readiness for work and future career opportunities. Therefore, strategic communication is a crucial element in building public understanding of the programs offered while encouraging audience participation (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Previous research indicates that the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has a significant positive impact on increasing brand awareness. Fitri et al. (2025), in their study of the BISA AI Academy training institution, found that an integrated IMC strategy across various digital channels significantly boosted brand awareness. The results of this study confirm that even though training institutions may have high quality programs, without effective integrated marketing communication, brand awareness will struggle to grow amid increasingly competitive industry conditions (Fitri et al., 2025)

In other research, Bonita et al. (2023) show that Instagram-based social media marketing strategies positively increase brand awareness. In the case study of PT Astra Motor Sulawesi Selatan, the implementation of an Instagram strategy successfully increased brand awareness by 4% in one year. These findings strengthen the importance of using digital platforms like Instagram to build brand awareness, particularly for organizations targeting young people in urban areas such as in Bandung (Bonita et al., 2023). Similarly, a study of a coffee brand in Indonesia showed that community involvement through social programs, together with clear and value-based communication, helped a lot with brand recognition, brand recall, and also positive feelings about the brand (Ihsan et al.,

2026). These examples point out that talking to the audience, whether through community engagement, is vital for raising brand awareness in Indonesia.

There's another research that emphasizes the visualization of brand identity in social media video communication plays a crucial role in increasing brand awareness. Their study of branded video posts on Instagram found that an adaptive visual approach aligned with message strategies (informational, transformational, and interactional) is more effective than the excessive repetition of static symbolic elements such as the logo or the color. These findings are highly relevant to BIM which is need to build brand awareness through video content featuring alumni testimonial and also training programs (Hwang & Lee, 2025).

Furthermore, Hwang and Lee (2025) concluded that the use of visual tone and shot scale in videos has a positive effect on brand awareness, while an excessively high frequency of logos can reduce the audience perception. Survey results among millennials and Gen Z indicate that flexible brand identity visualization that aligns with platform characteristics can create a stronger emotional experience. In this case, for Bahana Inspirasi Muda, this is strengthens the importance of designing video content that is not only informative but also can build an emotional connection with prospective participants.

Bahana Inspirasi Muda (BIM), is a human resource development organization established in 2014 in Bandung with a vision to prepare Indonesia's youth for international careers, particularly in Japan. Through its featured program, the organization integrates four pillars of development, which are mental, character, cultural, and professional skills. The program is primarily aimed at healthcare graduates and young people who wish to work as caregivers or professionals in Japan. In addition to providing training, the organization also offers various support facilities such as dormitories, mock interviews, and financial assistance schemes for participants (Bahana Inspirasi Muda, 2025).

Even though the program meets the needs of the job market BIM has a visibility issue. Many health science students and graduates in Bandung do not know that BIM exists, what BIM teaches or what careers BIM can lead to. Internal data show that a batch usually has thirty people. The gap, between what the program can provide and what people know about it is the problem this study looks at. A program that few people know about cannot fill its classes no matter how good it is and BIM has no communication signs that can explain why enrollment remains low.

This study believes that the problem with BIM is about communication and program

quality has little to do with it. Kotler and Keller (2016) say that an organization does well because of the quality of what it offers along with marketing communication that creates awareness, trust, and involvement. Tuten and Hanlon (2022) also says something about the time we live in, when social media is everywhere: even good programs have a hard time doing well without a clear communication plan. Planning is important because messages need to get to the people and the results need to be measured using things like how many people see the message, how much people interact with it and how many more people get involved (Kamyabi et al., 2025).

Previous research has extensively discussed marketing communication strategies and brand awareness building in educational and training institutions. Several studies indicate that the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) can significantly increase brand awareness in training institutions (Ratningsih et al., 2025; Widjaja et al., 2023). Khairunnisa and Juliadi (2023) examined social media marketing strategies for enhancing brand awareness among local fashion brands, emphasizing the importance of situational analysis and the use of social media as the primary communication channel. Meanwhile, Susanti et al. (2023) demonstrated that marketing communication strategies play a crucial role in shaping public perception and fostering positive relationships between organizations and their stakeholders.

However, most previous research has focused on business organizations, commercial brands, or public service institutions. Studies specifically addressing strategic communication planning in human resource development institutions oriented toward preparing the workforce for the international market remain relatively limited, particularly in the Indonesian context. Furthermore, previous studies are generally focused on evaluating existing communication strategies, whereas studies emphasizing a systematic communication planning process as a solution to organizational problems are still scarce (Nguyen et al., 2024).

Based on the gap this study aims to fill the research gap using Assifi and French's (1986) communication planning model to create a communication program for Bahana Inspirasi Muda. This model was chosen because it offers a set of communication planning steps, which include analyzing the situation, identifying the audience setting, communication goals, developing messages, choosing media, implementing the program, and evaluating. With its way the Assifi and French (1986) model is thought to be able to create communication strategies that are more focused, measurable and fit the organization's needs and the target

audiences features.

Therefore, this study aims to design a strategic communication program for increasing brand awareness and program participation in Bahana Inspirasi Muda or BIM. The research results are expected to provide practical contributions to the organization in developing more effective communication strategies, while also making an academic contribution to the development of strategic communication studies, particularly within human resource development institutions in the digital age (Ki & Kim, 2019).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to understand how BIM carries out organizational communication to recruit prospective participants. A qualitative approach fits because the question concerns practices, meanings, and the explanations of the people involved, which numbers alone cannot capture. BIM is examined as a single institution, and the findings are not meant for statistical generalization.

Bahana Inspirasi Muda (BIM) is in Hegarmanah, Cidadap, Bandung, and is an LPK that trains and places healthcare professionals in Japan. It was established in 2014 and has operated for more than a decade, and it states that it has helped hundreds of Indonesian health workers start careers abroad (Bahana Inspirasi Muda, 2025). It employs roughly 11 to 50 people (Bahana Inspirasi Muda, 2026). Its program rests on four pillars, namely mental, character, cultural, and professional skills development, and participants are supported with dormitories, mock interviews, and financial assistance schemes. Most participants are healthcare graduates and other young people who want to work in Japan as caregivers or in related professions. BIM cooperates with the Bandung City Manpower Office in a subsidized language-training scheme (Burhanudin, 2026), and a batch averages about thirty participants.

Informants were chosen purposively with three criteria. First, the person holds a role that is directly involved in BIM's communication with prospective participants, whether in promotion, program management, or the mentoring of trainees. Second, the person has worked at BIM long enough to describe how communication has been carried out across several batches. Third, the person agreed to be interviewed and to be identified by professional role only. These criteria led to three informants: the program manager (Informant 1), a *Sensei*, meaning a Japanese language and culture teacher who has mentored participants across several batches (Informant 2), and the marketing coordinator (Informant 3). Each interview was semi-structured and lasted between 30 and 40

minutes. All the interviews happened in June 2026. The questions talked about problems of visibility. The questions also covered how participants see the program. The questions included ideas for communication that would interest people more. The people who took part gave consent before the interviews.

Data were collected through three techniques. The first was online observation of BIM's official social media accounts on Instagram, TikTok and YouTube during June to September 2026. The observation recorded the content published, the format and frequency of posts, the number of followers, and the responses of the audience in the comments. Field notes and screenshots documented what was seen. The second was analysis of digital documents: BIM's official website, public descriptions of BIM on job and training listings, and news coverage of the training scheme in Bandung. The third was the interviews described above.

The observation was limited to public content. Only what BIM and its audience had posted openly was recorded, usernames of people who commented were not kept, and comments are described in general terms or quoted without identifying their authors. The documents were public or were supplied by BIM for this study, and the participation data are reported as aggregates.

The data were analyzed with the interactive model of Miles et al. (2014), which has three components, namely data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. In data condensation, the field notes, document excerpts, and interview data were coded and grouped into themes. Three themes emerged are limited visibility among prospective participants, weak engagement with current promotional content, and the cultural and character-building side of the program, as an unused source of appeal. In data display, the findings were arranged in matrices: a SWOT matrix (see Table 2), a matrix that sets the SWOT elements against the interview themes (see Table 3), and a matrix that compares BIM's practice with the planning stages of Assifi and French (1986) (see Table 4). Conclusions were drawn and checked by moving back and forth between the three data sources. Assifi and French (1986) serve here only as a vocabulary for describing the stages of BIM's communication, and the analysis does not apply their model as a prescribed procedure.

A literature review supported the interpretation of the findings. It was not a data collection technique. It drew on peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and the original planning guideline of Assifi and French (1986) on marketing communication, organizational trust, and communication planning, and it supplied the concepts that guided the analysis and the

earlier studies against which the findings are compared in the discussion. To check the accuracy of the data, information was compared across sources: observation, documents, and interviews. A finding counts as well supported when at least two sources agree, and findings that come from one source only are reported as such. Quotations from interviews are reported with the informant's code and the date of the interview, and informants are identified by role only, which protects their identity while keeping the source traceable. Contradictory or missing evidence was kept in the analysis and reported, as were topics the informants did not mention.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Online observation shows that BIM communicates with prospective participants mainly through its official social media accounts. Table 1 summarizes their profile. The content uploaded by BIM covers job openings in Japan, the achievements of alumni and participants, highlights of participants' journeys to Japan, and daily activities such as outreach events with the Ministry of Health and Career Day. Generally, they post once a week on each social media platform, but it appears that engagement on TikTok is higher than on Instagram and YouTube.

The audience responses visible in the comments were mostly about their experience or asking about the program they show in the videos. For example, a comment on JFT target content asked what would happen if they didn't meet the passing score, and 10 comments asked about cost, legality or departure schedule. Some of them also asked about how long it takes to become a participant at this institution and where it is located. Whatever the details, the marketing coordinator's remark that many posts do not draw high engagement from the younger generation is consistent with what the observation shows.

Digital document analysis shows how BIM presents itself. Public descriptions portray BIM as an institution for the training and placement of professional healthcare workers, with more than a decade of experience and hundreds of alumni

**Table 1 Profile of BIM's Online Channels**

| Platform | Observed profile |
|---|---|
| Instagram | 30,8K followers; 70 posts observed in 4 months; 3 comments per post |
| TikTok | 4,637 followers; 70 posts observed in 4 months; 20 comments per post |
| YouTube | 1,55K subscribers; 4 videos observed in 4 months; 0 comments per video |
| Website | Recruitment information, program details, alumni stories, and other relevant information available |

Source: Research result, 2026

(Bahana Inspirasi Muda, 2026). The website stresses the four pillars, and the facilities it lists, namely dormitories, mock interviews, and financial assistance, answer practical worries of candidates (Bahana Inspirasi Muda, 2025). The participation data show an average of around thirty participants per batch. That number is low compared with the potential market, since vocational health schools in Bandung and West Java produce many graduates and interest in working abroad is growing among young people. The documents also show that BIM has no measurable communication indicators, such as reach, engagement rate, or awareness level so it cannot judge how well its promotion works.

The interviews describe the problem from three positions inside the organization. The program manager spoke of a visibility problem and not a quality problem: "we have quality programs, but our visibility among prospective participants is still very limited" (Informant 1, personal communication, June 10, 2026). The *Sensei* pointed to what attracts young people. According to him, prospective participants become interested once they learn about the cultural and mental preparation involved: "Young people today are more interested when we share stories about how they learn Japanese etiquette, discipline, and how to prepare to work as caregivers. Content like this is very powerful in capturing their interest" (Informant 2, personal communication, June 12, 2026). The marketing coordinator described the promotion: "Many of our posts do not generate high engagement from the younger generation" (Informant 3, personal communication, June 10, 2026). The three informants hold different roles, yet their accounts point in the same direction. The program manager sees the organization as a whole and reports limited visibility. The marketing coordinator works with the content and reports weak engagement. The *Sensei* meets participants in the classroom and sees what makes them curious about the program.

Table 2 shows the SWOT analysis that came from the three data sources. BIM has a solid foundation, but communication is its main weakness. The external situation is not clear. There is potential for growth because of the need for caregivers in Japan, more people wanting to work in countries and changes in digital media. However, there are also dangers, that competition from training schools has a bad opinions about working in Japan and changes in visa also work laws are all threats.

The external side of the SWOT matters for communication too. Demand for caregivers in Japan and growing interest in working abroad give BIM a theme that people already care about, so its messages do not have to create interest from nothing. The threats call for a different kind of message. Negative perceptions of

**Table 2 SWOT Analysis of Bahana Inspirasi Muda**

| Aspect | Description |
|---|---|
| Strength | Over 10 years of experience, a holistic four-pillar, training program, comprehensive facilities, partnerships with the government and educational institutions, and the success of alumni. |
| Weakness | Low brand awareness limited promotional reach, a communication strategy that is not yet integrated, and budget constraints. |
| Opportunities | High demand for caregivers in Japan, growing interest among the younger generation in working abroad, and advancements in digital media technology. |
| Threats | Fierce competition with other vocational training institutions, negative public perception of working in Japan, and changes in visa and labor policies. |

Source: Research result, 2026

working in Japan and changes in visa and labor policies mean that candidates and their families will look for accurate, current information, and an institution that supplies it openly gains credibility that competitors who only promise results cannot match. Competition from other training institutions, including the other LPK in Bandung, makes this more pressing, since a candidate who cannot tell the institutions apart will choose based on familiarity or price.

Table 3 sets the SWOT findings against the interview themes. On the central weakness, the two sources agree. Informant 1's account of visibility matches the SWOT weaknesses of low awareness and limited promotional reach. Informant 3's remark about engagement adds something that SWOT did not show: BIM's messages often fail to reach people, and the ones that do reach people fail to move them. The *Sensei'*s account connects with a strength, in Table 2. The four-pillar program and the success of alumni are real assets, yet the informant's accounts suggest that BIM has not turned them into content. Two parts of the SWOT find no support in the interviews. No informant mentioned the budget constraint or the external threats of competition, negative perceptions, and changing policies. These items rest on the other sources and are treated as context and not as findings the interviews confirmed.

Table 4 compares BIM's practice with the planning stages of Assifi and French (1986). Based on the analysis, the researchers found that several stages BIM carries out are in line with those stages. BIM identifies its target group, chooses social media as its main channel, and carries out its promotion routinely. Other stages are weak or missing. BIM has no measurable communication objectives, its messages dwell on the administrative side of the program, and it does not evaluate the results of its communication. This is a statement of resemblance. Nothing in the data suggests that BIM follows the model deliberately, and the model is used here only to name the stages.

Read together, observation, documents,

**Table 3 Triangulation of SWOT Findings with Interview Themes**

| SWOT element | Interview evidence and relation |
|---|---|
| Weakness: low brand awareness and limited promotional reach | Corroborated. Informant 1 described visibility among prospective participants as very limited. |
| Weakness: communication strategy not yet integrated | Corroborated and extended. Informant 3 reported low engagement from the younger generation, which points to a content problem as well as a reach problem. |
| Strength: four-pillar program, facilities, and alumni success | Corroborated but not yet communicated. Informant 2 said stories about etiquette, discipline, and preparing to work as caregivers attract young people. |
| Opportunity: growing interest in working abroad and advances in digital media | Partly corroborated. Informant 2's account shows that young people respond to experience-based stories; labor demand in Japan was not discussed. |
| Weakness: budget constraints. Threats: competition, negative perceptions, visa and labor policies | Not raised by any informant. Supported by the other sources only. |

Source: Research result, 2026

**Table 4 BIM's Communication Practice Compared with the Planning Stages of Assifi and French**

| Stage | BIM's practice and assessment |
|---|---|
| Situation analysis | BIM recognizes its visibility problem and records participation per batch, but has no communication indicators. Partly in line. |
| Audience identification | Targets healthcare graduates and young people who want to work in Japan. In line. |
| Objective setting | No measurable communication objectives for reach, engagement, or awareness. Not yet. |
| Message development | Messages stress the administrative side; stories of discipline, etiquette, and work readiness are underused. Partly in line. |
| Media selection | Social media is the main channel. In line. |
| Implementation | Promotion is carried out routinely. In line. |
| Evaluation | No systematic evaluation of communication results. Not yet. |

Source: Research result, 2026

and interviews reveal a pattern that none of them shows alone. This study calls it the three-layered gap in BIM's communication. The first layer is an information gap: prospective participants do not know the program exists. The second is a channel gap. BIM relies on social media posts that draw little response, while the personal channels it already has through *Sensei*, alumni, and staff appear to play a smaller role in recruitment than they could. The third is a narrative gap. BIM's messages dwell on the administrative side of the program, while the *Sensei*'s remarks suggest that young people are drawn to stories of discipline, etiquette, and readiness for work. The layers are cumulative. Closing one of them alone, for example by posting more often without changing what is posted, will probably change participation very little. This also explains why BIM's routine promotion has produced so few results.

The findings can also be understood through the lenses of trust and uncertainty reduction. What a candidate wants to know before deciding is whether the institution is capable, cares about its participants, and is honest, which are the ability, benevolence, and integrity that Mayer et al. (1995) identify. BIM already has material for each alumnus who have worked in Japan, facilities that address participants' practical worries, and a record of more than ten years. This information mostly is in the written descriptions on the website and in listings, and not much in the stories and conversations that move young people. Personal contact is the most direct way to reduce uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975), and in BIM's case it is the least developed part of its recruitment communication.

BIM's position can also be understood in relation to the institutions described earlier. LPK Sakura presents itself through discipline, supervised training, and a record of more than 500 participants (Rifai & Fakhruddin, 2025), and the institutions in Bandung are introduced to the public through the Manpower Office (Burhanudin, 2026). BIM has the focus on discipline and character, and it has the benefit of a decade of operation and a specialization in healthcare. What the documents do not show is a systematic effort to turn these strengths into evidence that a candidate or a parent can see. Where an institution is promoted by a government office, part of the work of building trust is done by someone else, and BIM can use that endorsement more openly in its own communication.

The main finding that BIM's low participation comes from how it communicates and not from what it teaches, supports Kotler and Keller (2016), who see marketing communication as the bridge between program quality and market response. Tuten and Hanlon (2022) reaches a similar conclusion for the social media era. Awareness is only the first step, since Kotler (2002) defines awareness as recognition and recall, for an institution working under suspicion recognition without trust does not lead to enrollment.

The scam context sharpens the finding. Public attention goes to cases such as the alleged trafficking operation in West Nusa Tenggara where candidates were promised work in Japan and never sent (iNews, 2026). For a family that has read such reports, a polished social media post proves little, because fraudulent operators can also post. What separates a legitimate institution is verifiable detail, who the partners are, who the alumni are and where they work, what the training involves, and how long it takes. The *Sensei*'s remark that young people respond to stories of daily learning points the same way, since such stories are specific

and hard to make up. Communication that is only trying to convince, without any proof, is unlikely to change the minds of candidates who are already wary.

A comparison with the studies reviewed earlier also shows what is different here. Brand awareness studies normally focus on recognition as the goal. For BIM, recognition is a precondition and the real aim is a decision to enroll which involves risk. This explains why the recommended program in the conclusion gives personal contact and verifiable evidence should be as important as reach and impressions, and why indicators like participation per batch matter as much as engagement rate.

Research on IMC and Instagram agrees with the finding that coordinated, interactive communication helps. Fitri et al. (2025) found that IMC raised brand awareness at BISA AI Academy. IMC explained 16.9% of the variance, Bonita et al. (2023) reported a 4% rise in awareness at PT Astra Motor Sulawesi Selatan after a year of Instagram activity helped by sponsorship, a brand ambassador, and direct interaction. Rahardani and Sanjaya (2022) found advertising on Instagram to be the most effective element in one company's mix. These figures should not be read as forecasts for BIM. Industry, organizational scale, and audience differ so the size of an effect depends on context. What the comparison offers is a consistent pattern in which integrated communication is associated with higher awareness in very different settings.

The narrative gap finds support in research on visual identity and storytelling. Hwang and Lee (2025) show that tone and shot scale in Instagram videos increase awareness and repeating a logo too often might lower its impact. The best approach uses strategies that highlight benefits and experience, and these work best with visuals that support storytelling (Hwang & Lee, 2025). Silalahi and Guna (2024) link video content and storytelling to closer ties with audiences, and Qausya and Bernadette (2023) report that a recognizable visual identity and a narrative matching the values of a young audience raised brand recall (Qausya & Bernadette, 2023; Silalahi & Guna, 2024). This fits what the *Sensei* observed, and it also fits research showing that younger generations respond better to messages that are authentic, visual, and based on experience (Appel et al., 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Lou and Yuan (2019) add that message value and credibility shape trust in branded social media content. Alumni testimonials meet this condition better than organizational announcements, because they come from people that the audience can regard as credible peers.

The personal approach has support in the literature as well. Ihsan et al. (2026) report that

a coffee brand gained recognition and positive feelings through social programs that put it in direct contact with communities, and open houses and school visits would do something similar for BIM. These efforts can reach people who are not active on social media. Virtual influencers are another option (Khasawneh et al., 2026), but in a climate of suspicion, a virtual persona might work against credibility, and the interviews did not test whether prospective participants would accept one. Inside the organization, Wuersch et al. (2024) show that internal communication that builds staff capabilities, which supports coordination and trust. Barbulescu et al. (2024) and Wuersch et al. (2024) found that employees who view HRM practices positively raise an organization's attractiveness.

For BIM, these studies suggest that staff members, *Sensei*, and alumni can become spokespersons if the institution treats them well and aligns their message. Sakaki and Jory (2019) make a point from corporate finance, where stable long-term owners give management room to innovate. In the same way steady relationships with partners, alumni, and prospective participants give a training institution the stability to keep investing in communication. Mjelde and Tønnesen (2025) add that messages persuade only when they address the context of their audience, so BIM's communication should speak to prospective participants' concerns about cost, time, legality, and fit with their career plans.

The findings also call for a look at the Assifi and French (1986) stages. The model was created for rural development campaigns, where audiences had limited access to media, and it treats the cognitive, affective, and conative stages as a sequence. For digital natives, these stages often happen at the same time during a single session. A prospective participant might learn about the program, feel drawn to an alumni story, and ask a question in the comments within minutes. Message planning and media selection must be designed together and not one after the other.

The results suggest a communication program that BIM could adopt the program combines the earlier analysis with the lessons from the literature. Its objectives would be set at three levels. The first goal is cognitive, to raise awareness of BIM and its programs among healthcare students and graduates. The second goal is affective, to build a credible and positive image. The third goal is conative, to increase enrollment. Each level has its own indicators. Reach, impressions, and awareness show whether more people know BIM, engagement rate shows whether the content draws a response, and participation per batch shows whether awareness turns into enrollment.

The message would be built around the lived experience of training and working in Japan, told by *Sensei* and alumni, under a storyline such as "From Bandung to the Land of Cherry Blossoms: Build Your Career and Character." Social media would carry the stories, open houses, school visits, and open consultations for candidates and parents would carry the personal contact. Since BIM does not yet record reach, engagement, or awareness, the first task is to set baseline figures against which a six-month pilot can be read.

The program is a recommendation and not a result. Each part of the program addresses a gap found in the three data sources. The objectives and indicators cover the missing steps in setting goals and evaluation outcomes, the storyline answers the narrative gap, and the personal channels answer the channel gap. It has not been tried, and it might need to change once BIM begins to measure its audience. What the study can claim is that the program is consistent with the data, not that it will work.

Several limitations need to be stated. This study analyzed BIM's existing communication and did not test whether changing that communication would raise awareness or participation. The social media observation was limited to a short time and cannot show long-term trends. The interviews involved only three informants, all of whom work at or with BIM, so the views of prospective participants, parents, and alumni were not collected directly. Finally, the analysis reflects the situation in Bandung in 2026, and platforms, audience habits, and visa and labor policies can shift rapidly.

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to analyze how Bahana Inspirasi Muda carries out organizational communication to recruit prospective participants for Japan's labor market. It finds that BIM communicates mainly through routine social media promotion that draws little response, and that its personal channels, through *Sensei*, alumni, and staff, play a smaller part than they could. Several of BIM's practices, such as identifying its target group and choosing its media, match the basic stages of communication planning, but it sets no measurable objectives, tells its story mostly in administrative terms, and does not evaluate results. The result is a three-layered gap in information, channel, and narrative. In a climate where fraud makes the public cautious, this gap is also a gap in trust: the institution has the ability, care, and track record to be believed, yet it has not made them visible. The study makes two contributions to strategic communication research. The three-layered gap gives institutions with good programs and little public recognition a way to diagnose why routine promotion fails, and

the trust and uncertainty lens shows why a personal approach deserves a deliberate place in recruitment communication. The critical reading of the stages shows that they have to be treated as overlapping, not sequential, for digital audiences. Both points come from a training institution that has seldom been studied from this angle.

For BIM, the authors recommend setting up a small communications unit that produces content on a regular schedule. *Sensei* and alumni should be the main storytellers, and content should give priority to character development, work culture, and life in Japan, for instance under the storyline "From Bandung to the Land of Cherry Blossoms: Build Your Career and Character." BIM should also make its legitimacy easy to verify by showing its partners, its cooperation with the Bandung City Manpower Office, and the experience of alumni, and it should add personal channels such as open houses, school visits, and open consultation for candidates and their parents. Communication objectives should be set at the cognitive, affective, and conative levels and tracked with indicators such as reach, impressions, engagement rate, awareness, and participation per batch. A six-month pilot, measured against baseline figures, would show which parts deserve more investment. Beyond BIM, other real training institutions can use the diagnosis and the same indicators before they spend on promotion, though institutions in other sectors or with other audiences might find different layers. The benefit to society is small but real, that young people who want to work abroad can only choose among institutions they can find and judge, and clearer, more honest communication helps them do so with better information. Future research should evaluate the recommended program with baseline and follow-up measures, include the views of prospective participants, parents, and alumni, also compare several LPK to see whether the three layers hold elsewhere. The conclusions here describe one institution in one city, and they should be known as a basis for further testing and not as a rule for every LPK.

**Acknowledgements:** The author would like to thank the management of Bahana Inspirasi Muda for giving permission and access during the research process. Special thanks go to the Program Manager, Marketing Coordinator, and BIM *Sensei* for agreeing to serve as informants and providing valuable insights during the interviews. The author also thanks the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran for support during the preparation of this research. Gratitude is also extended to the instructor of the Brand Creativity Strategy course for the guidance and direction provided throughout the research process.

**Author contributions:** Conceptualization, Q.A.S.A.; methodology, Q.A.S.A.; formal analysis, Q.A.S.A.; investigation, Q.A.S.A.; data curation, Q.A.S.A.; writing—original draft preparation, Q.A.S.A.; writing—review and editing, Q.A.S.A., A.K., N.A.S., and Y.S.; supervision, A.K., N.A.S., and Y.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**AI declaration:** The authors used Claude and DeepL to assist in language refinement and translation, also analytical synthesis of the Results and Discussion and Conclusion sections. All content was reviewed and verified by the authors, who take full responsibility for its accuracy and originality.

**Ethical clearance:** This study did not undergo formal ethical review by an institutional ethics committee, as it was conducted as part of an academic course assignment. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all interview participants prior to data collection, and their identities have been presented using their professional roles to maintain a degree of confidentiality.

**Data availability statement:** The data is available by request to the author.

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding. This work was conducted as part of an academic course assignment at the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran.

## REFERENCES

Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R., & Stephen, A. T. (2020). The future of social media in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *48*(1), 79–95. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00695-1

Ariyanto, I., Musslifah, A. R., & Putri, D. R. (2026). Eksplorasi harapan dan kecemasan calon peserta magang LPK Kamisora terhadap kehidupan kerja di Jepang. *Jurnal Psikologi Malahayati*, *8*(2), 223–241. https://doi.org/10.33024/jpm.v8i2.23297

Assifi, N., & French, J. H. (1986). *Guidelines for planning communication support for rural development campaigns*. UNDP Asia, DTCP.

Bahana Inspirasi Muda. (2025). *Yuk ke Jepang bersama Bahana!* Bahanainspirasimuda. Com. https://bahanainspirasimuda.com/

Bahana Inspirasi Muda. (2026). *Instruktur Bahasa Jepang - Bandung*. Glints. Com. https://glints.com/id/opportunities/jobs/instruktur-bahasa-jepang-bandung/13a23cfa-f121-4148-a0cf-aade2f6576f5

Barbulescu, F.-M., Vasiluță-Ștefănescu, M., Stoicov, I., Coman, C., & Coman, E. (2024). Strategic management of internal employer branding – guerilla strategies to engage and retain top employees in a challenging workforce environment. *Frontiers in Communication*, *9*(July), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1402125

Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R. J. (1975). Some explorations in initial interaction and beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research*, *1*(2), 99–112. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.1975.tb00258.x

Bonita, I., Bahfiarti, T., & Sonni, A. F. (2023). The Impact of Instagram's Social Media Marketing Activity Strategy on PT Astra Motor's Selatan Sulawesi Brand Awareness. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Social and Politics (ICSP 2023)*, *816*(Icsp), 137–145. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-194-4_15

Burhanudin, A. (2026). *Pelatihan calon pekerja ke Jepang di Bandung berlangsung 6–10 bulan*. RRI (Radio Republik Indonesia). https://rri.co.id/bandung/regional/2612091/pelatihan-calon-pekerja-ke-jepang-di-bandung-berlangsung-6-10-bulan

Djafarova, E., & Rushworth, C. (2017). Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *68*, 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.11.009

Dwiprakasa, M. O., Misnawati, D., Zinaida, R. S., & Isnawijayani. (2025). Communica: Journal of Communication. *Communica : Journal of Communication*, *1*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.61978/communica.v3i1

Fitri, A. N., Rahmawati, A., & Hamdani, T. C. (2025). Pengaruh komunikasi pemasaran

terpadu terhadap brand awareness Lembaga Pelatihan Bisa AI Academy di era digital. *Edutik: Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi Dan Komunikasi*, *5*(3), 555–562. https://doi.org/10.53682/edutik.v5i3.11846

Hwang, I. K., & Lee, H. (2025). Brand identity visualization to enhance brand awareness contingent on the message strategy for social media video communication. *Archives of Design Research*, *38*(3), 51–75. https://doi.org/10.15187/adr.2025.08.38.3.51

Ihsan, M. S., Zordi, D. A., & Patrianti, T. (2026). Strategi komunikasi CSR Kopi Jago dalam membangun brand awareness di kalangan konsumen dan komunitas. *TUTURAN: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, Sosial Dan Humaniora*, *4*(1), 12–21. https://doi.org/10.47861/tuturan.v4i1.2044

iNews. (2026). *Dijanjikan kerja di Jepang, 6 calon PMI di NTB nyaris jadi korban perdagangan orang*. Www.Rctiplus.Com. https://www.rctiplus.com/news/detail/nasional/5418005/dijanjikan-kerja-di-jepang-6-calon-pmi-di-ntb-nyaris-jadi-korban-perdagangan-orang

Kamyabi, M., Özgit, H., & Ahmed, J. N. (2025). Sustaining digital marketing strategies to enhance customer engagement and brand promotion: Position as a moderator. *Sustainability*, *17*(7), 3270. https://doi.org/10.3390/su17073270

Khairunnisa, P. K., & Juliadi, R. (2023). Social media marketing strategy to increase brand awareness of local fashion brands. *Jurnal Manajemen Komunikasi*, *8*(1), 21–38. https://doi.org/10.24198/jmk.v8i1.43548

Khasawneh, M., Omeish, F., Abu Hmeidan, T., Al-Tabakhi, R., Jaber, D., & Alnaimi, H. M. (2026). Virtual influencers in social media marketing: Toward a systematic understanding of their impact. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, *53*(6), 9463. https://doi.org/10.35516/Hum.2026.9463

Ki, C. (Chloe), & Kim, Y.-K. (2019). The mechanism by which social media influencers persuade consumers: The role of consumers' desire to mimic. *Psychology & Marketing*, *36*(10), 905–922. https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21244

Kotler, P. (2002). *Marketing management, millenium edition*. Pearson.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management*. Pearson.

Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, *19*(1), 58–73. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501

Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. *The Academy of Management Review*, *20*(3), 709. https://doi.org/10.2307/258792

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Mjelde, H., & Tønnesen, A. (2025). "Mixing the Green and the Grey": How public officials use strategic communication to advance sustainable transport policies in Norwegian medium-sized cities. *Frontiers in Communication*, *10*(August). https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1633504

Nguyen, C., Tran, T., & Nguyen, T. (2024). Factors affecting users' brand awareness through social media marketing on TikTok. *Innovative Marketing*, *20*(1), 122–131. https://doi.org/10.21511/im.20(1).2024.11

Qausya, A. A., & Bernadette, S. (2023). Strategic marketing public relations

for brand elevation: A case study of the # JacquelleDisneyEdition Campaign. *Journal of Communication & Public Relations*, *2*(2), 80–102. https://doi.org/10.37535/105002220245

Rahardani, M. E., & Sanjaya, R. (2022). The strategy of marketing communication mix to increase brand awareness through Instagram in PT. ICF. *Journal of Management and Business Environment (JMBE)*, *4*(1), 43–54. https://doi.org/10.24167/jmbe.v4i1.4727

Ratningsih, A., Elpa Hermawan, & Ondy. (2025). Strategi komunikasi PT Otoklix dalam meningkatkan brand awareness di Indonesia. *JIMU:Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisipliner*, *3*(04), 1034–1039. https://doi.org/10.70294/jimu.v3i04.1195

Rifai, A., & Fakhruddin, F. (2025). Manajemen pelatihan program pemagangan ke Jepang di Lembaga Pelatihan Kerja (LPK) Sakura Purwodadi Kabupaten Grobogan. *Riwayat: Educational Journal of History and Humanities*, *8*(4), 7973–7987. https://doi.org/10.24815/jr.v8i4.50824

Rotok, A., Salean, D. Y., Wijayanti, N. S., & Bunga, M. (2025). Analisis strategi komunikasi pemasaran untuk meningkatkan brand awareness terhadap PT. Morige Nusa Tenggara Timur. *ARZUSIN*, *5*(3), 1217–1232. https://doi.org/10.58578/arzusin.v5i3.5781

Sakaki, H., & Jory, S. R. (2019). Institutional investors' ownership stability and firms' innovation. *Journal of Business Research*, *103*(March 2018), 10–22. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.05.032

Silalahi, H., & Guna, S. (2024). Enhancing brand awareness through vontent marketing strategy analysis in the digital landscape. *Journal on Economics, Management and Business Technology*, *3*(1), 9–18. https://doi.org/10.35335/jembut.v3i1.222

Supit, G. R. A. (2025). Peran komunikasi pemasaran dalam membangun brand awareness. *Jurnalika: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, *9*(1), 27–41. https://doi.org/10.37949/jurnalika91200

Susanti, C. E., Srimulyani, V. A., Hermanto, Y. B., & Waloyo, L. A. S. (2023). Building public satisfaction with marketing communication strategy and service quality. *Jurnal Manajemen Komunikasi*, *7*(2), 136. https://doi.org/10.24198/jmk.v7i2.40431

Tuten, T. L., & Hanlon, A. (2022). Introduction to social media marketing. In *The SAGE Handbook of Social Media Marketing* (pp. 3–13). SAGE Publications, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529782493.n1

Widjaja, W., Muhamad Syahril, L., Sudi, M., & Hamidah, E. (2023). Pelatihan strategi komunikasi pemasaran online dalam meningkatkan brand awareness di UMKM. *SABAJAYA Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, *1*(3), 180–187. https://doi.org/10.59561/sabajaya.v1i3.66

Wuersch, L., Neher, A., Maley, J. F., & Peter, M. K. (2024). Using a digital internal communication strategy for digital capability development. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, *18*(3), 167–188. https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2024.2330405