

Public speaking skills of public relations at statistics of West Java Province

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ABSTRACT

Background: Statistics Indonesia (BPS) is one of the government agencies that always engage with the community through, for example, censuses, surveys, and dissemination of statistical data. For that reason, the role of Public Relations at BPS is certainly needed. However, the organizational structure of Public Relations does not exist at BPS provincial and regency/city levels. The role of Public Relations at BPS provincial and regency/city levels is carried out by employees that are appointed based on policies through Public Relations Decree. **Purpose:** This study aims to examine public speaking skills possessed by the public relations staff of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java. **Methods:** This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach. The sample used was a saturated sample of 79 people who were appointed as Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java in 2022. **Results:** The results showed that as many as 97.46 percent of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java did not earn a degree from public relations background and only 37.97 percent had attended a Public Relations training. However, the public speaking skills of public relations staff of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java were reported as “Good” category, both in general and in terms of gender, age, and education. **Conclusion:** This “Good” category result is argued to be caused by habituation to public speaking activities through meetings, committee activities, and training instructors. **Implications:** BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java should hold training activities, courses, and workshops on the topic of Public Relations routinely to improve the skills of Public Relations.

Keywords: Public relations; public speaking; skills; BPS; government

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INTRODUCTION

In an organization, be it in a company, government, or even an educational institution, the Public Relations (henceforth, PR) section often, if not always, plays an essential role. Public Relations is needed in organizational operations, especially organizations that are in direct contact with the wider community (Ukwedeh, 2015). Even in certain contexts, Public Relations is the spearhead of organizations that come face to face with society, for instance in terms of information centers, services or marketing (Datuela, 2013).

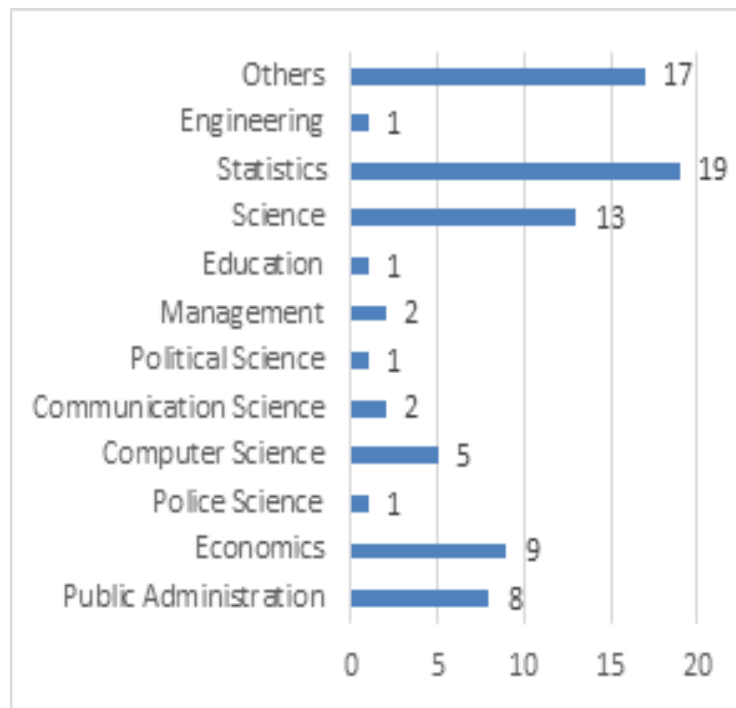
Within the bureaucrats and government sectors, Public Relations also has a role that is no less important. Although there are so many perceptions about government Public Relations whose work is only around the preparation of news clippings, mediators with the press, or organizers of government activities (Astuty et al., 2017), it's the duties and functions go far beyond those activities. Public relations of government agencies must be able to socialize government programs through several media, provide information services, maintain the image of government agencies, and be able to handle communication crises that occur in society (Princewell & Vincent, 2015). All of these tasks and functions require qualified public speaking skills .

As one of the government agencies, the BPS Statistics Indonesia also has a Public Relations section in its organizational structure. The Public Relations Department is in the Public Relations and Law Bureau which is directly under the supervision of the Main Secretariat of BPS. However, BPS Public Relations only exists in the organizational structure of the central level. Meanwhile, at the provincial and regency/city levels, Public Relations structure does not exist yet (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022).

Similar to BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java, the Public Relations section does not exist in the organizational structure. In fact, in the technical work, BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java is in direct contact with the community both in collecting data through censuses and surveys and in publishing statistical data on the results of census and survey activities.

Based on these needs, BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java took the initiative to form a Public Relations consisting of one or several employees appointed based on a Public Relations Decree. The process of appointing public relations does not refer to specific provisions and rules, but is based on the leadership's observation of the competence of its employees.

In 2022, the number of employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West



Source: BPS Provinsi Jawa Barat, 2022

Figure 1 Background of Public Relations Education of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java

Java appointed as Public Relations will reach 79 people. BPS of West Java Province is the agency with the highest number of Public Relations members, 14 people. For the regency/city levels, the most Public Relations members are in BPS of Bekasi Regency with 7 members (BPS Provinsi Jawa Barat, 2022).

This phenomena on shows that BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have different numbers of Public Relations members. This is based on the needs of organizational formation, the limitations of Human Resources, and the policies of the Head of BPS itself.

Considering that the process of appointing Public Relations in BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java does not refer to specific

provisions and rules, it is also necessary to question the competence possessed by the Public Relations, especially in terms of public speaking. This is very important because 97.46 percent of Public Relations in BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java do not have an educational background related to Public Relations.

Figure 1 shows that most of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java hold a degree in the field of Statistics, which is 24.05 percent. In second place is the Science field at 16.45 percent. Meanwhile, the field of Communication Science, which is closely related to Public Relations, is only 2.53 percent.

This is certainly very contrary to the daily work of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java which requires competence in the field of Public Relations, one of which is public speaking skill (Heriyanto, 2021). Although these competencies can be obtained through training, workshops, or courses, it is necessary to study more deeply about the public speaking skills of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

With such conditions, this paper aims to answer the following interesting and important questions; (1) how is the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java?, and (2) what advice can be given so that the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java can improve performance in the field of Public Relations?

Aligned to the formulated research questions, the objectives of this study can be determined as follows: (1) to determine the level of public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java, and (2) to provide advice in an effort to improve public speaking skills for Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

Research on public speaking skills has actually been carried out by previous researchers. One of them is research conducted by Ariani

Rosadi, Lubis Hermanto, and Ahmad Hidayat from the STISIP Mbojo Bima Communication Science Study Program, West Nusa Tenggara, in 2020. The research which took the title “Public Speaking and the Leadership Style of Bureaucrats in Government Agencies (Case Study in Penaraga Village, Bima City)” discussed public speaking skills and leadership styles among bureaucrats. The results of the study revealed that public speaking skills and leadership styles among bureaucrats were strongly influenced by educational background, experience, and culture (Rosadi et al., 2020).

A similar research was also conducted by Atef Al-Tamimi from the Faculty of Arts, Hadhramout University and Munir Shuib from the National Higher Education Research Institute, Universiti Sains Malaysia. The research published in LSP International Journal, Volume 3, Issue 1, in 2016 took the title “Public Speaking Skills Needs of English Majors at Universiti Sains Malaysia”. The study, which used a survey method with a quantitative approach, involved 39 students in the English majors at the School of Humanities at Universiti Sains Malaysia.

The results showed that the respondents practiced their English skills through college assignments related to English conversation, such as in group assignments. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents were competent

enough in performing almost all the public speaking skills, although they encountered a moderate level of communication apprehension (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2018).

Both studies have a topic similar to the current research regarding public speaking skills. While the difference lies in the subject of the study. In this study, the subjects of the study were the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

Public speaking skills have two general concepts, “skills” and “public speaking”. In the Indonesia Dictionary (KBBI), skills is ability, proficiency, and strength. Some scholars argue that skills is the capacity of a person to carry out some activity in a job (Subkhi & Jauhar, 2013). Others say that skills is the overall potential that a person has to perform varies in work.

Skills in a person are classified into two types, which are intellectual skills and physical skills. Intellectual skills is a person’s ability to think clearly, maintain emotions, reason, and solve problems effectively and efficiently. This skills is come from a long process and is usually drawn from life experience. A person who has good intellectual skills will usually overcome all life problems calmly, effectively, efficiently, and solutively (Robbins & Judge, 2013).

Meanwhile, physical skills are one’s ability to perform physical activity that involves body stamina and skills. This skills is come from the

results of intense and diligent training. A person who has good physical skills is usually able to perform various activities well and has good competence in various things. These two types of skills, both intellectual skills and physical skills, play an important role in everyday human life. One of them – in the context of Public Relations – is in public speaking.

Public speaking is the art of speaking through effective oral communication and it takes place continuously between the speaker and the listener with the aim that the listener thinks, feels, and acts according to what the speaker expects (Khoriroh, 2018).

In general, there are three elements in public speaking, which are the speaker, message, and audience (Bylkova et al., 2021). In public speaking activities, speakers act as communicators and information centers. The speaker needs to have the ability to attract attention and persuasion to help listeneners understand or recognize his or her meesage. The second element is message. It is the information conveyed by the speaker to the listener. Messages can be conveyed through words directly or through various media, be it in the form of audio (songs, sound recordings) or visuals (images, videos). The third element, audience, is a person or group of people who capture the message conveyed by the speaker. As a human being, the audience has different

characteristics from the speaker. Therefore, it takes competence and good ability for a speaker to be able to influence the audience (Zainal, 2022).

From these two concepts, public speaking skills can be understood as a person's ability, be it innate or the result of intense practice, in conveying information to others so that the person is affected or at least has the same perception of the information conveyed (Abella & Cutamora, 2019). A person's public speaking skills is greatly influenced by internal and external factors, which are personality, character, physical form, level of education, and association (Fitrananda et al., 2018).

In the context of organizations, be it companies, institutions, or government agencies, public speaking skills are important for Public Relations. In general, Public Relations is a field of work that interacts directly with the wider community (Vural, 2015). The position of Public Relations is very important because in addition to being a bridge between the organization and the community, it also plays a role in maintaining the image of the organization (Prastowo, 2020). To carry out its role, Public Relations must have a variety of qualified skills and competencies, one of which is the ability to speak in public.

As a Public Relations, it is appropriate to have good public speaking skills and abilities.

In relation to the community, public relations must be able to speak well and effectively to internal and external parties of the organization (Gezihagne, 2018). In addition, the PR staffs must also be proficient in managing the communication crisis that occurs within the organization itself or that involves the wider community (Darussalam et al., 2021).

In general, there are four basic Public Relations concepts that need to be considered. The four concepts are as follows: (1) gaining trust and a good image from the community, (2) creating public opinion that benefits all parties, (3) creating specific goals that meet the expectations of society but are also in line with the characteristics of the organization, and (4) creating harmonious relationship between the organization and the community (Lee, 2022).

In practice, the duties and functions of Public Relations in government agencies are no less important. Public Relations of government agencies play a role in delivering various government programs, providing public services, as well as dealing with polemics that occur in society. The existence of Public Relations in government agencies is based on two things. First, the government urgently needs the support and participation of the community in carrying out its programs and policies. Second, the public has the right to obtain information related to government programs as

a form of accountability (Vural, 2015).

Within the scope of government, there are four categories of Public Relations functions in government agencies. The four categories are (1) expert advice that functions to provide detailed input on effective steps that need to be taken in dealing with various problems in organizational communication, (2) communication facilitator who functions as a mediator between the organization and its own internal elements and with the general public as an external party of the organization, (3) a problem-solving facilitator who serves as a solution finder in every organizational communication problem. This function is closely related to the public relations function as an expert advisor, and (4) the communication function as a journalist who is technically active in communicating and conveying information through various media (Vural, 2015).

Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java has several duties such as making various efforts in socializing census and surveying data collection activities to the public. These socialization activities can be in the form of installing outdoor media such as billboards and banners, creating content on BPS official social media, organizing Focus Group Discussions (FGD), talk shows through television and radio media, campaigns at certain events such as exhibitions and Car Free Day

(CFD), handle the crisis management, and so on. Activities like this certainly require a fairly large and competent number of Public Relations human resources in BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses descriptive quantitative approach, that is conducted to determine the value of independent variables, either one or more variables without making comparisons, or linking with other variables (Sugiyono, 2019a). The quantitative approach based on the philosophy of positivism. It is used to examine certain populations or samples.

In this study, the analysis used was descriptive analysis. Descriptive analysis is data analysis by describing the data that has been collected as it is without intending to make conclusions that apply to the generalization (Sugiyono, 2019a). Thus, the data in this study is a collection of numbers that will later be presented in the form of graphs. The results of the data presentation are analyzed descriptively without having to compare one variable with another.

The population selected in this study was all Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java, totaling 79 people. One of the reasons for this population selection

is because researchers have close ties in terms of work and often interact with Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

The sample selection method used is a saturated sample technique, which is a sampling technique in which the entire population is sampled. This is done on the number of relatively small populations or researchers who aim to make generalizations of research results with very small errors (Sugiyono, 2019a).

The data collection technique carried out was to distribute questionnaires containing questions obtained from the results of variable operationalization of public speaking skills. This questionnaire was then tested for validity and reliability before being distributed to research respondents. This questionnaire trial was conducted on 30 respondents (Sugiyono, 2019b) who were appointed as Public Relations of BPS from other provinces that were not included in the research sample. Test the validity in this study using the help of the Microsoft Excel application.

Under the rule, if r_{hitung} is greater than or equal to r_{tabel} at a significant level of 0.05 then the question item is valid. However, if r_{hitung} less than r_{tabel} , the question is invalid. The table of values r Product Moment for the number of samples (N) = 30, then $df = (N-2)$ which is 28 with a significant degree of 0.05, the magnitude of r_{tabel} is 0.361 (Sudijono, 2014).

Table 1 Research Questionnaire Reliability Test Results

Variable	Reliability	Interpretation
Public speaking skills	0.888	Very high

Source: Researcher data, 2022

The results of the validity test, demonstrated that out of the 19 items of question details in the questionnaire, there were 4 questions that fell because they had a smaller calculated r_{hitung} than the r_{tabel} . Thus, there were 15 items of valid question details that would be disseminated through a research questionnaire to collect data.

After the validity test was carried out, the next step was to test reliability. A research questionnaire was declared reliable if the measurement results show fixed results even though they were taken many times in different periods of time (Taherdoost, 2016). In this study, reliability tests were carried out using the Cronbach Alpha formula with the help of the Microsoft Excel application.

From the results of the reliability test on the research questionnaire, the correlation coefficient was obtained as follows (Table 1).

The results of the reliability showed that the research questionnaire (without invalid question items) had a very high interpretation. After the validity and reliability test was carried out, the questionnaire was converted into Google Form format and distributed personally through the

Whatsapp application to 79 employees that were appointed as Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java. The research process was carried out within the BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java in a span of more than one month, precisely from November 24 to December 30, 2022.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned earlier, this study involved a sample of 79 respondents. The sample is a saturated sample, which means that the sample is taken from the entire population. Thus, the respondents in this study are all employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java who are appointed as Public Relations in 2022 through the Public Relations Decree of BPS Province and Regency/City respectively.

In this study, researchers observed the characteristics of research respondents through various aspects, which are gender, age range, and education level. For more details, these three aspects can be seen in the following descriptions.

Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java consist of 55 people of male (amounting to 70 percent) and 24 people of female (amounting to 30 percent). There is a tendency for men to have an interest in the field of Public Relations compared to women,

especially within BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

This condition is based on the characteristics of men who are considered by Public Relations work compared to women. Men have the characteristics of liking challenges, daring to take risks, and being quick in making decisions, while women tend not to think long and are too sensitive (Kurdaningsih & Handayani, 2022). However, there are several fields of work – one of which is in the hotel industry – whose Public Relations activities are dominated by women (Damayanti & Saputro, 2017).

When viewed from the aspect of age range, the characteristics of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java are divided into four age ranges, which are the age of 21 to 30 years old, 31 to 40 years old, 41 to 50 years old, and 51 to 60 years old. This age range is in accordance with the age range of employees in general.

Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java are dominated by employees in the age range of 31 to 40 years old. This shows that Public Relations activities within BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java are managed by the middle generation, the millennial generation. Interestingly, even though the percentage is small (amounting to 3 percent), it turns out that there are still employees in the age range of 51 to 60 years old

who manage Public Relations activities within the BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

This condition can be caused by several factors, one of which is limited Human Resources in BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java, especially for those who are considered to have Public Relations competence. However, the age factor is not an obstacle in carrying out Public Relations work. Factors that play an important role in Public Relations activities are attitudes, trust, skills, and quality control (Ahmad Ramli & Samat, 2020).

From the aspect of educational level, the characteristics of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java are divided into four, which are the high school, Diploma (D-III), Bachelor (S-1), and Masters (S2) levels. These four levels of education are selected and adjusted to the conditions of employees in BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

Our data portrays that Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java are dominated by employees with undergraduate education backgrounds, which is 65 percent. However, when viewed from the scientific field, only 2.53 percent have an educational background in the field of Public Relations, which is communication science. The remaining 97.47 percent have diverse

educational backgrounds such as Statistics, Science, Management, Economics, and so on.

This condition are certainly not a serious problem as long as Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have other skills beyond their educational background, especially skills in the field of Public Relations. Communication techniques, marketing, digital media management, journalism, and crisis handling are some of the skills in the Public Relations curriculum (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2022) that a Public Relations must have. However, do BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java already have such skills?

To answer this question, researchers tried to explore information whether the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have experience participating in Public Relations competency improvement programs through knowledge sharing activities, courses, or training. It can be seen that only 30 people (amounting to 37.97 percent) have attended public relations training. The remaining 49 people (amounting to 62.03 percent) have never attended public relations training. This is certainly very surprising considering the fact that the role of Public Relations in government agencies such as BPS is clearly needed. After all, the role of Public Relations is very important in building the image of a company (Alhadid & Qaddomi, 2016). The low Public Relations

competence Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have inadequate Public Relations competence, it is feared that it will have a negative impact on the image and business processes of BPS itself.

To facilitate descriptive analysis of research results, data obtained from the distribution of questionnaires need to be categorized in the form of scores. With this categorization of scores, individuals are placed into separate groups in tiers according to a continuum based on the attributes measured (Uher, 2018).

To compile this score categorization requires Hypothetical Mean and population unit Standard Deviation. The Hypothetical Mean is calculated by adding the maximum score by the minimum score, then dividing the result by two. While Standard Deviation is calculated by finding the score range, that is, the maximum score that respondents may obtain minus the minimum score that respondents may obtain, all of these score ranges are divided by six.

Based on the calculation of the score categorization formula, each respondent will be classified into the following five categories: “Bad”, “Poor”, “Fair”, “Good”, and “Excellent”. From the results of the study in the form of distributing questionnaires to respondents, calculations and score categorization formulas were obtained regarding the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and

Table 2 Score Categorization

Categorization	Score
Bad	$X < 26.25$
Poor	$26.25 < X < 33.75$
Fair	$33.75 < X < 41.25$
Good	$41.25 < X < 48.75$
Excellent	$X > 48.75$

Source: Researcher data, 2022

Regency/City of West Java as follows Table 2.

After getting the score categorization, the next stage is to make a frequency distribution table to find out how the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java. These public speaking skills will be seen from the categorization that has been compiled before.

Table 3 shows that most of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have public speaking skills with the “Fair” category, which is 48.10 percent. Meanwhile, those with the “Poor” and “Bad” categories were actually no more than 8 percent.

Table 3 Frequency Distribution by Category

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Bad	1	1.27
Poor	5	6.33
Fair	38	48.10
Good	19	24.05
Excellent	16	20.25
Sum	79	100.00

Source: Researcher data, 2022

Table 4 Score Categories by Gender

Gender	Score	Category
Man	42.90	Good
Woman	40.16	Fair

Source: Researcher data, 2022

This figure is small when compared to the overall percentage of other categories while the “Excellent” category related to public speaking skills is 20.25 percent.

But in general, the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java has an average score of 42.08. This shows that Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java on average have public speaking skills with the category “Good”.

This is certainly interesting because most of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java, which is 97.46 percent, do not have an educational background related to Public Relations. In addition, as many as 62.03 percent of them have never even attended public relations training. But in fact, Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java turned out to have quite good public speaking skills.

Then how is the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java when viewed from the aspects of gender, age range, and education level? To

find out this, we did a separate calculations in each aspect. The categorization of scores by gender can be observed through the following Table 4.

Table 4 shows that men have a better public speaking skills than women. Men have a score of 42.90 in the “Good” category while women have a score of 40.16 in the “Fair” category.

There are several factors that cause men to have superior scores than women. One of them is because men are considered to have better public speaking techniques – such as speech speed, tone, and smile intensity – than women (Singhal et al., 2018). Meanwhile, women prefer to talk face-to-face compared to public speaking (De Paola et al., 2020).

Apart from gender, the discussion can be continued by paying attention to the next aspect, the age range aspect. The categorization of public speaking ability scores of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java based on age range can be seen in the following table.

In the Table 5, it can be seen that Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java who are in the age range of 41 to 50 years old have slightly better public speaking skills compared to other age ranges. This is based on a much greater experience in interacting with others compared to those who are still young. In addition, emotional maturity

Table 5 Score Categories by Age Range

Age Range	Score	Category
21 to 30	44.18	Good
31 to 40	40.52	Fair
41 to 50	45.69	Good
51 to 60	40.50	Fair

Source: Researcher data, 2022

also has an influence – in addition to self-efficacy – in the courage to communicate, especially in terms of public speaking (Budi Utomo, 2017).

Meanwhile, in the table it can be seen that the public speaking ability with the lowest score is in the age range of 51 to 60 years old. One of the reasons is because at that age their work productivity has decreased (Børing & Grøgaard, 2021) and is approaching retirement age, which also has an impact on their public speaking skills.

Furthermore, public speaking skills of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java will be observed through aspects of education level. The categorization of scores based on education level can be seen in the following table 6.

From the aspect of education level, Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java who have High School and Diploma education levels actually have better public speaking skills compared to those whose education level is Bachelor and Master's degree. This is because those who have a lower level of education are more often on duty in the

Table 6 Score Categories by Education Level

Education Level	Score	Category
High School	44.43	Good
Diploma	45.55	Good
Bachelor	41.51	Good
Masters	40.50	Fair

Source: Researcher data, 2022

field and have loader practical work so that they communicate more often with the community or outsiders. Thus, indirectly these conditions train them – who have High School education and Diploma levels – in public speaking skills.

As for the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java that have an education level above it, in this case Masters, have the lowest public speaking ability score. This is because those who are highly educated focus more on managerial in terms of work (Velasquez, 2018) and do not require intense communication skills. On the other hand, the data suggest that public speaking skills do not always correlate with a person's level of education.

This study argues that Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have good public speaking skills. This category applies in every aspect, the aspects of gender, age range, and education level. In fact, not all Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have educational backgrounds related to Public Relations. It was recorded that

only 2.53 percent received education in the field of Communication Science, the remaining 97.47 percent had an educational background that was not related to the field of Public Relations. Most of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have a statistical education background, which is 24.05 percent.

Although indeed educational background does not correlate with public speaking skills (Rahman Hz & Ramadhan, 2022), it needs to be explored further whether the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have participated in public relations training. From the results of this study, it was also revealed that not all Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java had attended the training. Only 37.97 percent of them had attended public relations training. The remaining 62.03 percent had never attended public relations training once.

This is certainly an interesting discussion because how could Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java who do not have educational backgrounds related to Public Relations and have never attended public relations training but have good public speaking skills? From the observations, it was found that the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java were obtained indirectly through their daily work.

For example, BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java very often hold meeting activities, both meetings in the internal environment and external meetings with external parties. In these activities, of course, several practices require communication skills such as expressing opinions, answering questions, and so on. With the frequent activities of these meetings, the PR staff indirectly participated in training the public speaking skills of employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

In addition to meeting activities, BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java also always hold a census and surveys socialization activities regularly. Given that BPS's task is to carry out basic statistical activities through censuses and surveys, BPS always organizes census and survey socialization activities. In this activity, several appointed employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java will be the host, moderator, or even speaker. This condition causes the public speaking skills of employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java to be honed and developed properly.

Public speaking skills are also obtained from activities of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java involving external parties such as coordination of government activities through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) or

audiences to local government officials. This activity also requires qualified communication skills and this is the right moment to practice public speaking skills.

Various kinds of census and survey training held by BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java in certain periods can also train public speaking skills. This training activity involves employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java as training instructors. Although some of the staff may experience obstacles and difficulties in teaching, they will become accustomed and trained to teach and speak in front of trainees as they regularly participate in the program.

In addition, on several occasions, BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java also held knowledge-sharing activities in the internal environment. In this activity, representatives of employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java are required to convey directly to all employees about certain materials that can add insight and knowledge. In this way, public speaking skills can be honed and trained properly.

Finally, one of the important and often carried out activities by BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java regularly is data collection through census and surveys. This activity is a data collection activity involving respondents from various circles,

be it households, companies, or non-business households. This census and survey data collection activity of course requires good communication skills, in this case, public speaking skills.

BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java employees who are appointed as census and survey officers must communicate directly with respondents, conduct persuasion and invitations to answer questions given during interviews, and various other communication activities. With such direct practices, employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java can train and improve their public speaking skills.

These routine activities make employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have good public speaking skills – especially those who are appointed as Public Relations – even though they do not have an educational background in the field of Public Relations and have never attended Public Relations training. However, direct practice in daily work activities that require public speaking skills is much more effective than just training.

However, what needs attention is the important role that the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City currently have. Given that BPS is a government institution that often deals directly with the community, both in the process of collecting data through censuses and surveys as well as disseminating statistical

data through publications and audiences, public speaking skills need special attention. Poor public speaking skills can have an impact on the decline in the image of BPS institutions, on the contrary, good public speaking skills can indirectly improve the image of BPS institutions – in this case BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java – in the public perceptions.

CONCLUSION

The results show that most Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java have public speaking skills in the “Fair” category. The categories “Poor” and “Bad” are only owned by a small number of personnel. However, on average, both in terms of gender, age range, and education level, the public speaking ability of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java has the “Good” category.

This is interesting because BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java does not have Public Relation organization structure. The Public Relation formed by Public Relations Decree and consists of one or several employees appointed based on leadership’s observation of the competence of its employees.

Most of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java do not have an educational background related

to the field of Public Relations. Some of them have never attended Public Relations training to improve their Public Relations competence. However, the results showed that the public speaking skills possessed by the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java were relatively good.

One of the factors causing the emergence of this phenomenon is the fact that almost all employees of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java – including those who are not appointed as Public Relations – are familiar with daily office activities that require public speaking skills. For example, coordination meetings, knowledge sharing, government agency activity committees, socialization, evaluation meetings, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and teaching practices during census and survey training. Such office activities are carried out regularly in a certain period and indirectly hone the skills of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java in terms of public speaking.

Given that BPS is a government institution that deals directly with the community, both through census and survey activities as well as statistical data dissemination, the role of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java needs to be further improved. The area of improvement may cover public speaking skills in terms of socialization of census and

survey activities, dissemination of statistical data, or coordination with other agencies, and also public speaking in managing crises – both internal and external crises – that occur in BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java.

For this reason, BPS of West Java Province needs to create a training program to improve the public speaking competence of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java. For example, holding workshops, training, seminars, and knowledge sharing with the theme of Public Relations and Public Speaking. Of course, they should invite competent speakers from other agencies who are more experienced in the field of Public Relations, especially in terms of public speaking skills.

In addition, it is also necessary to periodically evaluate the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java through annual performance reports of Public Relations and individual performance appraisals. This is essential for the improvement of the competence of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java. In this way, it is not impossible that the public speaking skills of Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java can be improved from the “Good” category to the “Excellent” category in the future.

In the end, this research is expected to make a major contribution to BPS, especially as

an evaluation material for the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java. Thus, the public speaking skills of the Public Relations of BPS Province and Regency/City of West Java can be improved even better. Moreover, this research is also expected to contribute to science. Other researchers can use the results of this research as reference material or even develop it again to a wider stage in their research.

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