



The Role of Situational Leadership in the Effectiveness of East Java Provincial DPRD Information Publication in the Disruption Era

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ABSTRAK

The era of information disruption demands that the East Java Provincial DPRD (Regional People's Representative Council) improve the effectiveness of its information publication to maintain transparency and public trust. However, obstacles such as publication delays, task overload, and the inappropriateness of leadership styles hinder the achievement of this goal. The research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, utilizing in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. Informants include DPRD leaders, public relations staff, and external partners. Research Findings Situational leadership contributes significantly to the effectiveness of information publication, especially through the flexibility of leadership styles and two-way communication. However, it is necessary to improve the objectivity of assessing staff readiness and the consistency of communication for optimal results in the disruption era.

INTRODUCTION

In the Reformasi era, improving the quality of public services has become an imperative for Indonesia's bureaucracy. Public service is not only a benchmark for the success of government administration but also a key driver in realizing good governance (Indriastuti, 2022). The essence of public service lies in its ability to meet public satisfaction (Puryatama & Haryani, 2020), which, in the context of government organizations, is realized by fulfilling the needs of individuals or the community in accordance with applicable procedures and regulations. However, a common phenomenon is the complexity of procedures and the uncertainty of information that hinders public access to services (Engkus et al., 2021), which ultimately has the potential to erode public trust in the government.

Therefore, the government, as the public service provider, has a responsibility to deliver services that are responsive to the community's needs. The quality of service provided is a manifestation of public information transparency, which is essential for the success of government administration (Halawa, 2019). Ideal public information services are open, fast, timely, economical, and simple. The effectiveness of public information dissemination, characterized by a swift and timely government response, can minimize the potential for social crises and ensure the dissemination of relevant information. In this regard, state bodies are required to prioritize transparency in every aspect of government, recognizing the right to information as an integral part of open governance (Kurniawan et al., 2022).

Information is a crucial resource that determines the success of the bureaucracy, making the effective management of information resources key to government control of public bodies. Public Information Transparency, regulated by Law No. 14 of 2008, is the result of aspirations from the public and various parties to realize good governance in Indonesia. Information transparency becomes the foundation for building a government that is good, transparent, open, and participatory in all state processes and the management of public resources. In this context, public relations (PR) holds an inseparable role within government organizations, acting as a catalyst for the organization's success in achieving open governance (Ashoer et al., 2020).

PR plays a strategic role in information publication, not only as a communication implementer but also as a facilitator of mutually beneficial relationships among stakeholders to build the organization's image (Saputra, 2023). The effectiveness of PR information delivery is determined by the use of good, accurate, and easily understandable language. PR also serves as the manager of information publication and a communication mediator between public organizations and the community (Amanda, 2022). Therefore, government PR is required to understand the aspirations of the community, fulfill their desires, and build trust.

Often, public expectations do not align with government realities, which can diminish public trust. One of the causes is the lack of public information about government activities (Maharani & Tedi Erviantono, 2020). Government information publication includes both internal publications (e.g., magazines) and external publications (e.g., online media) (S. Wanto et al., 2022). External publication has a wider and faster reach than internal publication. Photo and video documentation are also important as a source of information about institutional activities.

The East Java Provincial DPRD is supported by the DPRD Secretariat in carrying out its duties (East Java Provincial Regulation No. 5 of 2020; East Java Governor Regulation No. 109 of 2021). The DPRD Secretariat, led by the DPRD Secretary, is responsible to the DPRD leadership and the Governor (East Java Provincial Regulation No. 5 of 2020; East Java Governor Regulation No. 109 of 2021). The Protocol and Public Relations Subdivision is under the Legislation Division of the DPRD Secretariat and is tasked with conducting news coverage/reporting and documentation. The DPRD Secretariat's duties include organizing administration, managing finances, supporting the DPRD's tasks, and providing professional staff. The DPRD Secretariat oversees the General Affairs Division, the Finance Division, and the Plenary and Legislation Division, which in turn oversees the Legal Products Subdivision, the Data Subdivision, and the Protocol and Public Relations Subdivision.

An initial interview with the Protocol and Public Relations Subdivision of the East Java Provincial DPRD Secretariat revealed obstacles in the execution of tasks and functions, particularly delays in information publication, which is reflected in the lack of up-to-date news about activities or agendas on the website and social media. The factors causing these delays include a focus on tasks that need to be completed on the same day and a buildup of tasks from the leadership. These information publication delays result in the failure to convey all activities that are mandatory to be published to the public, a lack of transparency regarding the DPRD's agenda, and the potential for the public to be unaware of the latest regulations and policies. Delays in information publication were also found on social media platforms like YouTube, which are important channels for transparent communication with the public. Delays in information dissemination, such as information about the 2023 Regional Regulation being uploaded only in 2024, can have a significant impact on the community, including a lack of information transparency and public ignorance of the latest regulations and policies (S. Wanto et al., 2022). Poor information services can lead to a decline in public trust and an increase in potential misunderstandings towards the government, which can trigger protests and demonstrations (Maharani & Tedi Erviantono, 2020).

This study aims to analyze the role of situational leadership in the effectiveness of information publication by the East Java Provincial DPRD in the era of information disruption. This research offers novelty by integrating situational leadership theory into the context of information publication by a regional legislative body in the era of information disruption. This approach provides a new understanding of how adaptive leadership styles can enhance the effectiveness of government communication amidst digital challenges and information complexity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The situational leadership theory developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1982) emphasizes the importance of a leader's ability to adapt their leadership style based on the readiness, capacity, and needs of subordinates, as well as the constantly changing conditions of the work environment. Leadership styles are classified into directive and supportive, and their application is adjusted to the level of maturity of individuals or teams.

Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) situational leadership theory highlights that leadership effectiveness is determined by the leader's ability to align their leadership style with the readiness or maturity of subordinates. This level of readiness is assessed through two main aspects: competence (technical skills and knowledge) and commitment (motivation and willingness to take responsibility). From this theory, four main indicators can be identified:

1. Leader's ability to read the situation – the extent to which leaders can accurately analyze the readiness level of subordinates.
2. Flexibility of leadership style – the ability to shift from a directive to a supportive style according to the needs of subordinates.
3. Suitability of leadership style with subordinate readiness the appropriate application of the telling, selling, participating, and delegating styles.
4. Communication effectiveness – skills in delivering instructions, listening, providing feedback, and building positive interpersonal relationships.

In this context, situational leadership plays a crucial role in determining the success of information dissemination by the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). Adaptive leaders are able to quickly interpret changing situations, understand public communication needs, and encourage communication and public relations teams to adopt innovative strategies that are relevant to technological developments. Thus, the effectiveness of information dissemination can be achieved through a responsive and flexible leadership approach, particularly in the context of digital disruption, which demands openness, speed, and accuracy of public information. This theoretical framework provides a conceptual basis for analyzing the relationship between situational leadership style and the effectiveness of DPRD information dissemination in the era of disruption. It can further be utilized to develop a conceptual model and performance indicators for public communication based on values of transparency and participation.

Previous studies have shown that situational leadership has a significant influence on improving performance, competence, and engagement within organizations, both in the education sector and in government institutions. Labib and Asy'ari (2025) examined the practice of situational leadership in enhancing teacher competence in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Their findings revealed that leadership styles such as telling, selling, participating, and delegating could be adapted to individual teacher needs and significantly improved pedagogical, technological, and digital literacy. School principals played a central role in developing teacher competence through technology-based strategies, such as digital training, the use of virtual reality in learning, and the development of e-modules. These findings are reinforced by Aditama and Andari (2022), who also emphasized the importance of teacher development strategies through education and training, as well as strengthening digital literacy through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and the development of digital learning media.

Meanwhile, Wijayanti (2025), in her dissertation, found that situational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement, although not directly significant in improving performance. However, employee engagement was proven to be an effective mediator between leadership style and employee performance. This study underscores the importance of the non-physical work environment and the role of employees' emotional involvement in enhancing organizational effectiveness. On the other hand, Mu'awanah (2024), in her study of multimedia-based public relations in secondary schools, found that the application of transformational leadership—particularly in the dimensions of idealized influence and individualized consideration—was able to improve the effectiveness of public relations functions. Although different in approach, both leadership types emphasize the importance of adapting to organizational contexts and individual needs. Collectively, these four studies strengthen the argument that flexible and contextual leadership approaches are highly relevant in addressing public communication challenges in the digital era.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, aiming to explore in depth the role of situational leadership in enhancing the effectiveness of information dissemination within the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of East Java Province in the era of disruption. This approach seeks to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the leadership implementation process, the dynamics of institutional communication, as well as the perceptions of policymakers and communication staff regarding the effectiveness of the applied dissemination strategies (Yin, 2018).

The primary informants in this research include members of the DPRD leadership, staff from the public relations and documentation division, as well as external partners such as journalists or local media managers who are directly involved in DPRD's publication activities. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, taking into account their direct involvement in the process of institutional communication and information dissemination (Creswell, 2019).

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis, including publication reports, public relations agendas, and media activity archives. The interviews were designed to capture experiences, strategies, and challenges encountered in publication practices amidst rapid developments in information technology (Flick, 2018). Observations were carried out in the DPRD public relations office and during various activities involving public information dissemination.

Data analysis was conducted thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data validity was ensured through technique and source triangulation, as well as member checking to confirm the accuracy of findings with relevant informants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through this approach, the findings are expected to provide a comprehensive and relevant overview of the effectiveness of information dissemination through situational leadership in the DPRD of East Java Province.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the Role of Situational Leadership in the Effectiveness of Information Dissemination at the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of East Java Province in the Era of Disruption. Situational leadership plays a crucial role in determining the success of information dissemination within the DPRD of East Java Province, particularly in addressing the challenges of the digital disruption era.

Based on Hersey and Blanchard's theory, four key indicators can be used to explain leadership effectiveness in this context.

1. First, the leader's ability to read situations greatly influences the direction of the public relations team's work. DPRD leaders are generally able to identify the readiness level of public relations staff, particularly in terms of technical skills and work commitment. However, in some cases, this analysis has not been conducted systematically, but rather based on subjective judgment. This may result in inaccuracies in providing direction or delegating tasks.
2. Second, the flexibility of leadership style is strongly evident among the leaders. When faced with an information crisis or public pressure, a directive style is applied to accelerate decision-making. Conversely, in more stable situations, supportive and participative styles are prioritized to foster motivation and a sense of ownership within the team. This flexibility becomes a strength in maintaining the continuity and quality of

DPRD publications amid rapid changes in the digital information landscape.

3. Third, the alignment of leadership style with subordinate readiness shows that leaders strive to adjust their approaches. The *telling* style is frequently applied to new staff, while the *delegating* style is entrusted to experienced staff with higher maturity levels. This has a positive impact on work efficiency and the development of human resource capacity.
4. Fourth, communication effectiveness is a highly influential aspect in the success of information dissemination. Two-way communication between leaders and staff runs relatively well. Clear instructions, openness to feedback, and harmonious working relationships help create a productive work environment that adapts effectively to digital disruption.

Analysis Results

Based on the analysis, the role of situational leadership in the effectiveness of information publication by the East Java Provincial DPRD is considered quite significant. The leadership is capable of adjusting its style to the team's condition and the challenges they face. However, there is a need for improvement in the objectivity of assessing subordinate readiness and the consistency of communication to further optimize the effectiveness of information publication in the midst of the disruption era. Aisyah and Takdir's (2017) research show that the implementation of situational leadership styles, including telling, selling, participating, and delegating, has a positive impact on improving school quality. This success is supported by inclusive, motivating, and fair leadership, as well as the availability of competent human resources and adequate facilities and infrastructure.

Leaders' Ability to Read Situations

A leader's ability to read situations is a crucial element in determining the direction and effectiveness of team performance, including in the context of information dissemination within the DPRD of East Java Province. Field findings indicate that most DPRD leaders are able to recognize the internal conditions of public relations staff, particularly with respect to technical competence and work commitment. This is reflected in the statement of one DPRD leader who explained: *"We understand that not all staff have the same level of readiness – some are already highly experienced, while others still require intensive guidance. But we adjust our directions according to the situations we observe in the field."* (Interview, DPRD Leader, 2025).

This statement indicates leaders' awareness of the varying levels of work maturity among staff. However, the process of situational assessment is not yet fully based on data or systematic evaluation; rather, it tends to rely on intuitive or subjective approaches. As a result, in certain cases, inaccuracies occur in the delegation of tasks or the provision of instructions, which may hinder the smooth dissemination of information. A member of the public relations staff stated: *"Sometimes we feel that the directions given do not match our capacities. Tasks come suddenly, even though we are not technically prepared or still need prior coordination"*. (Interview, DPRD Public Relations Staff, 2025).

These findings are consistent with Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory, which emphasizes that leadership effectiveness strongly depends on leaders' ability to accurately analyze their subordinates' readiness. If leaders fail to read situations appropriately, the leadership strategies applied may prove ineffective. Therefore, it is important for DPRD leaders to develop more structured assessment mechanisms, such as competency evaluations and periodic performance tracking, to obtain a more objective understanding of staff conditions.

Weaknesses in leaders' ability to read situations have the potential to create disproportionate workloads, miscommunication, and decreased work motivation, particularly when tasks assigned do not align with staff capacity or readiness. Thus, the ability to read situations not only influences the quality of leaders' decision-making but also directly impacts the effectiveness of DPRD's information dissemination, especially in the digital disruption era that demands swift and accurate responses.

Leadership Style Flexibility

Leadership style flexibility is an essential aspect that enables leaders to adjust their leadership approaches according to the needs and conditions they encounter. In the context of information dissemination within the DPRD of East Java Province, this flexibility is particularly evident. Leaders are able to switch between a directive style when facing public pressure or emergency situations, and supportive or participative styles in calmer circumstances.

One DPRD leader explained: *"In a crisis situation, such as when a public issue develops rapidly, I must directly provide clear directions to the team. But beyond that, I prefer to discuss and provide space for staff to express their ideas"*. (Interview, DPRD Leader, 2025)

This statement illustrates an awareness of the importance of flexibility in leadership approaches. A directive style is employed to ensure speed and accuracy in decision-making under pressure, while supportive and participative styles are utilized to enhance team engagement and foster a sense of ownership in the work process.

This flexibility is considered to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the public relations team, particularly in addressing communication challenges in the digital era. One public relations staff member stated: *"We feel heard when given space to share ideas. But in emergency situations, the leader immediately steps in to give directions. That is very helpful because it allows us to know exactly where to move"*. (Interview, DPRD Public Relations Staff, 2025).

Through this flexible approach, leaders can cultivate a work environment that is adaptive and responsive. Such an approach is crucial, as challenges in the disruption era are highly dynamic and cannot always be addressed through a single leadership style. Hersey and Blanchard emphasize that leadership styles must be aligned with the readiness level of individuals or teams. Therefore, the ability of DPRD leaders to apply various leadership styles fluidly reflects the effective implementation of situational leadership principles.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that such flexibility must be accompanied by clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of each team member. In certain cases, overly rapid changes in style, or changes not clearly communicated, have caused confusion among staff. An external partner remarked: *"At times we are confused because the directions from leadership keep changing sometimes overly directive, sometimes too loose – making it difficult to gauge their expectations"*. (Interview, DPRD Partner Journalist, 2025).

This condition suggests that flexibility must remain within defined boundaries and be supported by a clear communication strategy. Consistency in organizational values and objectives needs to be maintained so that flexibility does not devolve into inconsistency. Therefore, leaders must possess strong communication skills to explain the rationale behind shifts in leadership approach and to build trust with their teams.

Alignment of Leadership Style with Subordinates' Readiness

The alignment between leadership style and subordinates' readiness serves as one of the key indicators of the effectiveness of situational leadership. In the context of information dissemination at the East Java Provincial DPRD, it was found that leaders generally applied the fundamental principles of Hersey and Blanchard's theory, particularly in adjusting their leadership approach to the public relations staff according to their level of competence and commitment.

Based on interview data, the leadership style adopted was adaptive. New staff members or those with limited experience in managing publications and information tended to receive a "telling" style approach, which is more instructional in nature. This was evident in the statement of one informant: *"When there are new staff members, we usually provide detailed guidance, from the content to the technical aspects of delivering it to the media. So, they are not left to figure it out on their own"*. (Interview, May 5, 2025).

Conversely, for staff members with sufficient work experience who were considered capable of handling tasks independently, leaders granted greater trust. The leadership style applied leaned more toward "delegating," where full responsibility was handed over to the respective staff member. This is consistent with the principle that leadership style should be adjusted according to the individual's level of readiness.

Such adjustments proved to enhance work efficiency and accelerate decision-making processes. Moreover, staff felt valued due to the full trust placed in them to complete tasks, which ultimately strengthened their sense of responsibility and work motivation. *"Once the leader recognizes a person's capacity, they usually entrust them with full responsibility. It gives us more flexibility and makes us feel appreciated"*. (Interview, May 8, 2025).

In other words, the alignment between leadership style and subordinates' readiness contributes to the creation of a healthy and dynamic work environment. It also accelerates decision-making and information distribution in the midst of the fast-paced digital disruption era.

Effectiveness of Communication between Leaders and Staff

Effective communication is a crucial foundation for the successful implementation of situational leadership. In the context of the Public Relations work at the East Java Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), communication between leaders and staff has been established quite well and is result-oriented. This aligns with the fourth indicator of Hersey and Blanchard's theory, namely communication effectiveness, which encompasses the ability to deliver instructions, listen to feedback, and build healthy interpersonal relationships.

Based on observations and interviews, it was found that leaders do not merely issue one-way directives but also create space for constructive dialogue. *"We usually have weekly meetings to evaluate publication content. Sometimes the leader gives directions, but they are also open to our input"*. (Interview, May 3, 2025).

This indicates that communication is two-way and participatory. The working relationship thus becomes more cooperative, and staff members feel actively involved in the process of preparing and disseminating public information.

Furthermore, in dealing with crises or urgent situations that require a swift response, communication effectiveness becomes highly significant. The accuracy of information delivery and clarity of instructions enable the team to respond promptly and effectively. *"If there's a sensitive or urgent issue, the leader usually gathers the team immediately, gives a clear briefing, and delegates tasks right away"*. (Interview, May 7, 2025)

This condition demonstrates that the leader's communication style is not only functionally effective but also strengthens team cohesion. Harmonious interpersonal relationships minimize the potential for conflict and enhance the quality of teamwork in public relations, especially when facing challenges in the era of information disruption.

Through effective communication, not only can instructions be carried out properly, but space is also created for continuous innovation and evaluation. This becomes an essential asset in maintaining the effectiveness of institutional information dissemination, particularly when speed, accuracy, and credibility of information are the main demands of the public.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis, the role of situational leadership has a significant contribution to the effectiveness of information dissemination by the East Java Provincial DPRD. Leaders are able to adapt their leadership style to the conditions and challenges faced by the team. However, improvements are needed in terms of objectivity in assessing subordinates' readiness as well as consistency in communication, so that the effectiveness of information dissemination can continue to be enhanced amidst the dynamics and challenges of the disruption era.

Based on the findings of this study, two main recommendations can be proposed to improve the effectiveness of information dissemination within the East Java Provincial DPRD.

1. First, it is necessary to strengthen leaders' capacity in conducting objective assessments of staff readiness and maturity. This can be achieved through leadership training that emphasizes individual needs analysis and appropriate strategies for adapting leadership styles.
2. Second, a more structured and consistent internal communication system is required. This can be realized by holding regular coordination meetings, fostering two-way discussions, and cultivating a work culture that is open to input and feedback.

These two recommendations are expected to reinforce the role of situational leadership and support the continuous improvement of information dissemination quality, particularly in addressing the challenges of the disruption era.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

For future research, two directions of study development are recommended.

1. First, research can focus on a comparative analysis between situational leadership and other leadership models, such as transformational or transactional, in the context of the effectiveness of public institution information dissemination. This is important to determine which leadership model is the most adaptive in the disruption era.
2. Second, it is recommended that research further explore the perspectives of subordinates or implementing staff more broadly, in order to understand the extent of their perceptions of the effectiveness of the leadership style applied by leaders. Thus, the study can provide a more comprehensive and holistic picture of the internal dynamics of the organization in carrying out effective public communication strategies.

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