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Implementation of Marketing Public Relations at a Technology Oriented Private University: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Telkom University

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Abstract

Competition among higher education institutions has increased the importance of strategic communication for differentiating institutions and maintaining relationships with prospective students and other stakeholders. This study focuses on Marketing Public Relations (MPR) and examines how Telkom University implemented Harris's Three Ways Strategy pull, push, and pass through publicly accessible communication content published from January to December 2025. The study addresses a contextual and empirical gap in the cited higher education MPR literature: existing studies discuss MPR, digital communication, and educational branding, but provide limited case-based explanation of how pull, push, and pass functions are represented within the communication practices of a private university whose institutional positioning emphasizes technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Using deductive qualitative content analysis, communication items were categorized according to operational indicators derived from Harris (1991) and interpreted using the interactive analysis procedures of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020). The retained evidence shows pull strategy through achievement narratives, experiential programs, and creator-mediated communication, push strategy through direct outreach, student messengers, campus experience, and youth-oriented language, and pass strategy through partnerships and external stakeholder relationships. The study offers a contextual empirical elaboration of the Three Ways Strategy in the single case of Telkom University and does not infer audience effects from content alone.

KEYWORDS
marketing public relations; three ways strategy; pull strategy; push strategy; pass strategy; telkom university.

Introduction

Competition among higher education institutions has made strategic communication increasingly important for attracting prospective students, maintaining stakeholder relationships, and differentiating institutional positioning. Indonesia's Pangkalan Data Pendidikan Tinggi (PDDikti) currently records 4,416 higher education institutions, 33,741 study programs, and 9,967,487 students, illustrating the scale and diversity of the national higher-education environment (Pangkalan Data Pendidikan Tinggi, 2026). The 2025 Higher Education Statistics publication further reports national data on institutions, study programs, accreditation, new students, enrolled students, graduates, and lecturers based on PDDikti reporting for the 2024/2025 academic year (Pusat Data dan Teknologi Informasi Kemdiktisaintek, 2026). Within this environment, universities use institutional publications, digital media, direct outreach, events, media relations, and stakeholder partnerships. This study approaches those activities primarily through Marketing Public Relations (MPR), rather than treating branding outcomes as the principal object of analysis. Institutional branding provides the context in which these MPR activities operate, but branding, image, reputation, and brand equity are not treated as interchangeable outcomes in this study. Brand identity refers to how an institution presents and differentiates itself, whereas image, reputation, and brand equity involve stakeholder perceptions and evaluations that cannot be established from institutional content alone.

Accordingly, the present analysis examines how Telkom University's publicly communicated positioning is represented through MPR practices, it does not measure whether those practices changed audience perceptions or strengthened brand equity.

Marketing Public Relations (MPR) provides the central conceptual focus of this study. (Harris, 1991) describes MPR as the planning and implementation of communication programs that support marketing objectives through credible information and relationships with publics. In higher education, this perspective is useful for examining how communication can attract attention, directly engage prospective students, and work through relationships with external stakeholders without reducing MPR to advertising or assuming that communication exposure automatically produces branding outcomes.

Harris's (1991) Three Ways Strategy provides the analytical framework: pull strategy, push strategy, and pass strategy. In this study, pull refers to communication that creates attraction or encourages audiences to seek further information; push refers to direct, participation-oriented communication addressed to prospective students; and pass refers to communication enacted through relationships with external stakeholders or third parties. These functions are operationalized as content categories in the Method section and are used to classify observable communication practices rather than to measure audience effects.

Previous studies have demonstrated the important role of Marketing Public Relations in building the branding of educational institutions. (Latuheru, 2019) found that MPR implementation can strengthen a university's image through effective communication management with the public and the development of good relationships with stakeholders. The study indicates that successful branding is shaped not only by promotional activities, but also by an institution's ability to build public trust through continuous communication.

Recent research reinforces the relevance of Marketing Public Relations and digital communication in contemporary educational contexts. (Wiwitan et al., 2024) identify Marketing Public Relations as an increasingly important activity for universities competing for prospective students, while (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023) show that higher education institutions use social media strategically through posting, interactivity, and content practices. These studies indicate that university communication increasingly combines relationship-oriented public relations with digitally mediated marketing communication.

The cited literature shows that MPR and digital communication have been examined in educational and higher-education contexts, including studies of institutional image, stakeholder relationships, social media, and recruitment communication. However, within the literature reviewed for this study, limited attention is given to an explicit content-based analysis that organizes a private university's communication practices through Harris's pull, push, and pass functions. The research gap addressed here is therefore specific rather than universal: how the Three Ways Strategy is represented in Telkom University's publicly accessible communication during 2025, and how those MPR practices correspond with the technology- and innovation-oriented positioning visible in the institution's communication.

The study does not assume that public universities, private universities, and technology-oriented universities necessarily use different MPR strategies. Such a comparative claim would require evidence across multiple institutions. Instead, Telkom University is treated as a single case in which the relationship between MPR practices and publicly communicated institutional positioning can be examined in depth.

This single-case focus allows the Three Ways Strategy to be examined as a set of broad MPR functions whose concrete forms may vary by communication context. The analysis therefore asks how pull, push, and pass are enacted in the selected case, rather than presuming in advance that institutional type determines the strategy.

Telkom University provides a relevant case because the communication materials retained for analysis repeatedly refer to technology, innovation, entrepreneurship, digital competence, and relationships with industry or digital-ecosystem actors. These characteristics are treated as features of the case and as interpretive context; whether and how they appear within pull, push, and pass practices is examined empirically in the Results section rather than assumed as a prior finding.

The recent literature also demonstrates the breadth of digital higher-education communication research. Content analyses have examined how universities structure social-media posts and communicate institutional identity (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023; Peruta & Shields, 2018; Pringle & Fritz, 2019), while audience studies have examined social media in university choice, brand equity, engagement, and enrolment intention (Nofrizal et al., 2024; Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022; Sagynbekova et al., 2021; Shields & Peruta, 2019; Withanage & Nguyen, 2023). Studies in Indonesia also document digital marketing communication and branding in student recruitment contexts (Khodijah et al., 2024; Octora & Alvin, 2022; Solihati & Azzam, 2023; Sriyanto et al., 2024). Together, these studies strengthen the contemporary context of university marketing communication, while leaving room for a focused examination of how MPR functions are represented through Harris's pull, push, and pass categories in a single institutional case.

Recent studies address MPR and digital communication in higher education from several directions. (Wijaya & Krismiyati, 2013) examine MPR strategies used by private universities to support student intake, while (Wiwitan et al., 2024) examine barriers in university Marketing Public Relations. (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023) demonstrate the strategic role of social-media communication across higher education institutions. The present study complements this literature by applying Harris's pull, push, and pass categories directly to a defined set of Telkom University communication evidence. Its intended contribution is a contextual empirical elaboration of MPR practice in one case, not a new MPR theory or a general typology of higher education institutions.

Marketing Public Relations as the Analytical Focus

Marketing Public Relations is used here as the primary analytical perspective for examining Telkom University's communication practices. The study concentrates on observable communication functions—attracting attention, directly engaging prospective students, and working through external stakeholder relationships—rather than evaluating whether the university's brand, image, reputation, or brand equity improved.

(Harris, 1991) defines Marketing Public Relations as the planning and implementation of communication programs designed to encourage purchasing decisions and increase customer satisfaction through credible information that can foster positive relationships between an organization and its publics. Unlike advertising, which tends to be directly persuasive, MPR places greater emphasis on strengthening trust, credibility, and long-term relationships with stakeholders.

MPR can intersect with broader integrated marketing communication practices because public relations, digital communication, events, and recruitment-oriented messages coexist across organizational channels. Recent Indonesian higher-education research has similarly examined integrated digital marketing communication in student admission contexts (Octora & Alvin, 2022) In this article, however, IMC is used only as background context. It is not employed as a second analytical framework, and the study does not code message integration, channel coordination, or internal organizational alignment as separate analytical categories.

This distinction keeps the analysis centered on MPR. (Harris, 1998) is therefore used to contextualize the relationship between public relations and marketing communication, while the empirical coding and interpretation are based on (Harris, 1991) pull, push, and pass functions.

(Harris, 1991) identifies three main approaches in Marketing Public Relations: push strategy, pull strategy, and pass strategy. Push strategy uses direct communication with target audiences, for example through school visits, education fairs, webinars, or presentations at schools. Pull strategy creates attraction to the institution through achievement publications, storytelling, social media, and other branding activities so that prospective students are encouraged to seek information independently. Pass strategy uses third parties such as mass media, alumni, industry partners, and influencers to strengthen institutional legitimacy and credibility.

In higher education, these strategies are not directed solely at increasing the number of prospective students. They are also intended to build long-term relationships with society. Marketing Public Relations can therefore integrate marketing activities with efforts to build an institution's image and brand.

Higher Education Branding as Context for MPR

Higher education branding is treated as the communication context of the study rather than as an outcome measured by the research. Recent studies show that social-media communication, electronic word of mouth, and digital engagement can be associated with university brand image, brand equity, and enrolment-related responses (Nguyen et al., 2021; Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022; Sagynbekova et al., 2021; Withanage & Nguyen, 2023). Because the present study analyzes publicly accessible communication content rather than audience perceptions, it examines brand-related meanings presented in MPR messages without claiming audience effects.

In contemporary higher education marketing, institutional meaning is communicated through academic quality, student experience, research and innovation, stakeholder collaboration, and digital engagement. Studies of university social media show that platform content, interaction, authenticity, and engagement have become important mechanisms for presenting institutional attributes and connecting with prospective students (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023; Peruta & Shields, 2018; Pringle & Fritz, 2019; Shields & Peruta, 2019).

Higher education communication is complex because universities address multiple stakeholder groups and must maintain coherent institutional meaning across communication environments. Research on web-based marketing, university social media, and international student recruitment therefore emphasizes not only promotional visibility but also information sharing, interaction, electronic word of mouth, and relationship development (Maresova et al., 2020; Momen et al., 2020; Sagynbekova et al., 2021; Zhu, 2019)).

This complexity is especially visible in digital communication, where universities simultaneously communicate institutional identity, achievements, opportunities, and stakeholder relationships. Research on social-media engagement in higher education indicates that interaction and information-sharing practices can contribute to relationship quality and brand-related responses, although such effects must be assessed using audience data rather than inferred from institutional content alone (Perera et al., 2023; Song et al., 2023).

In the digital era, higher education communication increasingly depends on how institutions manage content and interaction across social platforms. (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023), in a content analysis of 70 higher education institutions, identify posting, interactivity, and content as central dimensions of institutional social-media communication. Other studies similarly show that social-media interaction and engagement can contribute to university brand value, prospective-student engagement, and enrolment intentions (Nguyen et al., 2021; Nofrizal et al., 2024; Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022). These audience-level findings provide context for the present content analysis but are not treated as evidence of effects produced by Telkom University's communication.

Marketing Public Relations in the Higher Education Context

Prior studies indicate that higher education institutions use public relations, digital communication, events, media relations, student or alumni voices, and direct recruitment communication as part of their efforts to engage stakeholders. These activities are relevant to MPR because they can perform different communication functions, but their effects on awareness, credibility, loyalty, or enrollment require separate audience or performance data and are not inferred in this study.

(Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006) argue that successful higher education branding depends greatly on an institution's ability to provide authentic and consistent communication to all stakeholders. Communication strategy is therefore no longer limited to promoting student admissions, but is also directed toward the continuous development of institutional reputation.

Higher education communication can draw on institutional media, social platforms, student and alumni voices, external stakeholders, and direct experiences. Recent studies indicate that social-media interaction, digital marketing, and strategically managed content are relevant to university communication, recruitment, and stakeholder relationships (Khodijah & Trisiah, 2024; Octora & Alvin, 2022; Solihati & Azzam, 2023; Sriyanto & Muttaqin, 2024). The present study, however, does not measure audience trust, loyalty, advocacy, enrolment intention, or recruitment effects directly.

From the MPR perspective used here, higher education communication can be examined through three complementary functions. Pull creates attraction through narratives, achievements, digital content, or experiential exposure; push involves direct communication and invitations to prospective students; and pass operates through external stakeholder relationships and third-party communication. This functional distinction forms the basis of the coding framework used in the study. Recent empirical research further shows that prospective students use multiple information channels rather than a single promotional touchpoint. (Ng, 2023) found that admission websites, social media, and open/information days were among the useful channels for prospective undergraduates, while (Ruangkanjanases et al., 2022) demonstrated the relevance of social-media marketing activities to prospective-student engagement. (Amani, 2022) also identified word of mouth as useful in university choice, and (Kethüda & Bilgin, 2023) showed how university social-media activities can support advocacy and electronic word of mouth among current students. Together, these studies indicate that contemporary higher-education communication operates across digital, interpersonal, experiential, and stakeholder-mediated pathways, supporting the need to examine MPR beyond isolated social-media posts.

Accordingly, the study focuses specifically on how Harris's Three Ways Strategy is implemented in Telkom University's 2025 communication content. The case is examined for the observable forms taken by pull, push, and pass and for how those forms correspond with the institution's publicly communicated technology- and innovation-oriented positioning. The contribution claimed is a contextual empirical elaboration of MPR practice in one private-university case.

Accordingly, this study aimed to analyze the implementation of Marketing Public Relations at Telkom University through (Harris, 1991) Three Ways Strategy. The main research question was: How were pull, push, and pass strategies implemented in Telkom University's publicly accessible communication content from January to December 2025? A secondary interpretive question asked: How did the

observed MPR practices correspond with the technology- and innovation-oriented institutional positioning represented in that content?

Method

Research Type

This study used a qualitative approach with deductive qualitative content analysis to examine how Marketing Public Relations (MPR) was represented in Telkom University's publicly accessible communication during 2025. Qualitative content analysis was selected because the study sought to organize and interpret observable meanings and communication functions rather than measure audience effects; this approach can be conducted deductively using predetermined categories when the analytical framework is established in advance (Bengtsson, 2016; Harris, 1991) . Three Ways Strategy served as the principal analytical framework, with pull, push, and pass used as predetermined categories.

Research Object and Data Sources

The object of analysis was the implementation of Marketing Public Relations as represented in Telkom University's public communication. The sampling unit was a publicly accessible communication item or documented institutional activity published during 2025. The coding unit was the observable communication function contained in the item's text, visual material, activity description, call to action, or stakeholder relationship. The analysis therefore focused on what the communication represented and how it functioned within the MPR framework, rather than on audience attitudes, brand equity, or enrollment outcomes.

The documentary corpus was bounded to publicly accessible communication concerning Telkom University activities occurring from January to December 2025. The source manuscript identified Telkom University's institutional website, the student-admission website (SMB Telkom University), Campus Life materials, partnership/unit webpages, and external media coverage as documentary sources. Items were retained when they (1) were publicly accessible, (2) referred to a Telkom University communication activity during 2025, (3) contained sufficient textual or visual information to identify an observable MPR function, and (4) could be interpreted using the pull, push, or pass criteria. Duplicated or cross-posted coverage of the same activity was treated as one analytical case unless the second item contained a substantively different communication function. Indonesian- and English-language materials were eligible. The retained analytical evidence comprised 11 activities: three pull, two push, and six pass. A revision-stage source audit conducted in October 2026 rechecked the documentary basis of the retained cases against currently accessible public pages. Public 2025 pages were located for Content Creator Summit, Market Day Telkom University Surabaya, Mudik Roadshow, the Horizon University Indonesia collaboration, PT Gapura Liqua Solutions collaboration, Toyota Motor Corporation collaboration, PANDI collaboration, PERURI/GovTech collaboration, and relevant external-media coverage. The Prestasinya Tel-U program identity was independently verifiable on Telkom University's Campus Life site, although the exact 2025 episode used in the original coding was not recovered in the revision-stage search; similarly, an exact archived 2025 page for Hack Your Future was not recovered. These two items were therefore retained as source-manuscript evidence but interpreted conservatively. Because the original study did not preserve a complete platform-by-platform screening log, the study does not report an invented total number of initially screened posts and does not claim that the 11 items constitute a census of all 2025 Telkom University communication.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection used non-participant observation and documentation of publicly accessible communication materials. Each retained activity was recorded by activity/content name, publication or activity date when available, channel/source, observable message or activity characteristics, stakeholder orientation, and preliminary MPR function. Literature was used to establish the conceptual framework and interpret findings, not as empirical data. Cross-posted materials describing the same event were consolidated at the activity level to prevent duplicate counting, while substantively different communication functions could be coded separately. The revision-stage source audit was used only to verify traceability of the documentary evidence; it was not used to create new audience-effect data or retrospectively infer outcomes that were not observed in the original content.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a deductive qualitative content analysis procedure. First, each retained item was read in its original communication context and relevant textual, visual, and activity-based meaning units were identified. Second, the meaning units were condensed into observable communication features, such as attraction-oriented narrative, direct prospective-student invitation, experiential recruitment contact, stakeholder partnership, or third-party communication exposure. Third, these features were coded using operational criteria derived from (Harris, 1991) Three Ways Strategy. Pull was assigned when the primary function was to create interest or voluntary engagement without a direct enrollment request; push was assigned when communication directly reached prospective students and encouraged participation or recruitment-related action; and pass was assigned when communication foregrounded external stakeholder relationships or third-party communication pathways that could support institutional legitimacy and message circulation. Finally, coded items were grouped by strategy and interpreted comparatively. When an item contained more than one possible function, classification followed the dominant observable communication function and the coding rationale was documented.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was strengthened through four procedures. First, an explicit audit trail links each retained evidence item to an observable communication feature, code, operational indicator, and final MPR category (Table 2). Second, coding decisions were repeatedly checked against the predetermined definitions of pull, push, and pass, with ambiguous cases classified according to the dominant observable communication function and interpreted conservatively. Third, source comparison was used when multiple public records of the same activity were available, including institutional news, admission materials, partnership pages, and external media. Because institution-owned channels are not independent sources, this procedure is described as source comparison rather than independent-source triangulation. Fourth, a revision-stage source audit in October 2026 rechecked the traceability of the retained evidence and documented cases for which the exact archived page could not be independently recovered. No second coder or formal intercoder-reliability statistic was used; this is reported transparently as a limitation rather than replaced by a claim of coder triangulation. These procedures emphasize credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transparency without overstating the independence of the documentary sources.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval and informed consent were not applicable because the study analyzed publicly accessible institutional communication and did not recruit or interact with human participants. The analysis focused on institutional messages and activities rather than identifying or profiling individuals

appearing in public materials. To minimize copyright risk in the revised manuscript, third-party photographs and promotional graphics are not reproduced as analytical evidence; the relevant public pages are described and cited instead. This approach is consistent with the journal's requirement that previously published tables or figures comply with applicable copyright requirements and with Telkom University web terms indicating that reuse of protected content may require authorization. The study therefore relies on textual description, attribution, and source traceability rather than assuming that public accessibility automatically grants republication rights.

Results and Discussion

Analytical Evidence Overview

The qualitative content analysis retained 11 communication items or activities that contained sufficient public evidence for MPR classification. Three were categorized as pull, two as push, and six as pass. These counts describe the distribution of the retained analytical evidence and are not interpreted as measures of strategic intensity, frequency across all Telkom University communication, or effectiveness. Table 1 summarizes the distribution and defining characteristics of the three MPR categories, while Table 2 presents the coding trail used to connect representative evidence with the Three Ways Strategy.

Pull Strategy

The retained evidence indicates that pull strategy was represented by communication designed to attract attention and encourage further interest without relying primarily on a direct enrollment request. The three representative items retained in this category were Content Creator Summit 2025, the Prestasinya Tel-U podcast, and Market Day Telkom University Surabaya. Content Creator Summit 2025, held on 28 November 2025, brought together digital creators in an institutional event centered on positive-content production. In the available documentation, creators functioned as communication intermediaries; because the dataset does not establish whether resulting content was independently produced and distributed by users, this study describes the pattern as creator-mediated communication rather than user-generated content or earned media.

Another retained item was the Prestasinya Tel-U podcast, which presented student achievements in a conversational narrative format rather than only through formal institutional news. Market Day Telkom University Surabaya, involving more than 70 tenants, provided a physical interaction space involving the campus community and surrounding publics. In the analyzed institutional content, these activities portrayed the campus as active, participatory, and open; this wording refers to the representation contained in the communication materials and does not claim a measured change in audience image or perception.

Table 1. Categorization of Marketing Public Relations Strategies in the Retained Telkom University Communication Evidence

MPR Strategy	Number of Retained Items (n=11)	Percentage	Characteristics of Findings
Pull	3	27.3%	Attraction-oriented narratives, digital/experiential content, and voluntary engagement without a primary direct-enrollment request.
Push	2	18.2%	Direct prospective-student outreach, invitation, presentation, and participation-oriented recruitment communication.
Pass	6	54.5%	External stakeholder relationships, partnerships, and communication exposure extending beyond direct recruitment communication.

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2026

Table 2. Coding of Retained Communication Evidence Based on Harris's (1991) Three Ways Strategy

Evidence Item	Observable Meaning/Communication Feature	Code	Operational Indicator	MPR Category
Content Creator Summit 2025	Digital creators were involved in an institution-organized communication event.	Creator-mediated attraction	Voluntary attention/engagement; no primary direct-enrollment request	Pull
Prestasinya Tel-U Podcast	Student achievements were presented through a conversational narrative format.	Achievement narrative	Institutional interest generated through story-based content	Pull
Market Day Telkom University Surabaya	Entrepreneurial activity provided experiential exposure to campus life and student activity.	Experiential attraction	Interest generated through experience rather than direct recruitment	Pull
Mudik Roadshow 2025	Active students directly visited schools and communicated with prospective students.	Peer-to-peer recruitment outreach	Direct contact with prospective students	Push
Hack Your Future: Campus Visit	Prospective students were invited to visit campus and participate in a future-oriented experience.	Direct participation invitation	Call to participate in recruitment-related campus activity	Push
Horizon University Indonesia	Public communication foregrounded an inter-institutional relationship.	Institutional partnership	External stakeholder relationship	Pass
PT Gapura Liqua Solutions	Public communication foregrounded collaboration with an external organization.	External collaboration	Stakeholder relationship beyond direct recruitment	Pass
Toyota Motor Corporation	Partnership communication connected the university with an industry actor.	Industry partnership	External legitimacy/stakeholder relationship	Pass

Evidence Item	Observable Meaning/Communication Feature	Code	Operational Indicator	MPR Category
PANDI	Communication foregrounded collaboration within the digital ecosystem.	Digital-ecosystem partnership	External stakeholder relationship	Pass
PERURI	Communication foregrounded collaboration with an external institutional actor.	Institutional partnership	Stakeholder relationship beyond direct recruitment	Pass
ANTARA coverage	A Telkom University-related message appeared through an external media channel.	External media exposure	Third-party communication pathway, independence not assumed	Pass

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2026

Push Strategy

Push strategy was identified in communication that directly addressed prospective students and invited participation in recruitment-related activities. The two retained examples were Telkom University Goes to School under the Mudik Roadshow 2025 program and Hack Your Future: Campus Visit. In one documented Mudik Roadshow example, on 22 January 2025 students from the North Sumatran Student Association conducted an outreach visit to Swasta Harapan Medan High School, addressing Grade XII students through classroom presentations and question-and-answer sessions. The direct audience contact and recruitment-oriented setting support its classification as push strategy; the study does not infer actual conversion from this content.

The second retained example, Hack Your Future: Campus Visit, invited prospective students to visit the campus and combined merchandise, campus experience, and future-oriented information. Its tagline—"the future is not something to wait for, but something to hack and create"used youth-oriented digital vernacular and a technology metaphor consistent with the event's recruitment framing. The analysis treats this as a feature of message design; it does not infer the linguistic preferences or persuasive response of the audience without audience data.

Pass Strategy

Pass strategy was identified where the communication foregrounded relationships with external stakeholders that could extend institutional messages beyond direct recruitment communication. Harris's (1991) framework treats such third-party and stakeholder relations as relevant to the pass function because they operate through external relationships rather than only institution-to-prospect persuasion. The retained evidence included an MoU with Horizon University Indonesia on 17 January 2025, cooperation with PT Gapura Liqua Solutions on 8 January 2025, a strategic visit by Toyota Motor Corporation on 1 July 2025, cooperation with the Indonesian Internet Domain Name Registry (PANDI) on 8 August 2025, and collaboration with PERURI in late October 2025 concerning the Digital Diploma Application and digital-talent development. The PERURI collaboration also appeared in ANTARA News. Because this study did not independently verify the editorial origin of that article, it is described conservatively as external media exposure rather than assumed to be independent earned-media coverage.

Interpretation of Pull Strategy Findings

The Content Creator Summit illustrates creator-mediated communication within the pull category. The available material documents institutional involvement of digital creators as participants or message-distribution partners, but it does not establish that the resulting content met a strict definition of user-generated content or that creator involvement increased audience trust. The analytical significance therefore lies in the communication structure: Telkom University incorporated external digital actors into an attraction-oriented activity rather than relying solely on one-way institutional publication. This interpretation is consistent with recent research showing that interaction and engagement are important dimensions of higher education social-media communication (Capriotti & Zeler, 2023) This pattern is broadly consistent with recent educational communication research emphasizing digital media and relationship-oriented communication in institutional marketing (Afidah, 2024; Wiwitan & Novita, 2024). The present case adds a more specific descriptive observation: the pull activities examined included experiential formats and creator participation alongside institution-owned achievement narratives. This is a contextual finding from Telkom University and should not be generalized as a defining characteristic of all technology-oriented higher education institutions.

Interpretation of Push Strategy Findings

The Mudik Roadshow and Hack Your Future materials show two distinct push-strategy message forms. Mudik Roadshow used peer-to-peer delivery because active students communicated directly with prospective students in school settings. Hack Your Future used experience-based campus visitation and youth-oriented digital language. These observable features indicate adaptation of channel, messenger, and message style to a prospective-student context. However, the content-analysis design cannot establish that peers were perceived as more credible, that the language matched audience preferences, or that either format was more persuasive; those questions require audience-based data.

Recent higher education marketing research provides a useful context for interpreting these message forms without treating audience effects as findings of this study. Social-media communication and marketing activities can support brand equity, engagement, trust, and enrolment-related responses, but these outcomes are demonstrated through audience-level designs rather than content evidence alone (Ruangkanjanases & Chen, 2022; Sagynbekova et al., 2021; Sriyanto & Muttaqin, 2024; Withanage & Nguyen, 2023). In this article, such studies are used only to contextualize the observed communication design, not to claim that Telkom University achieved those effects.

Interpretation of Pass Strategy Findings

The pass-strategy evidence shows that several 2025 institutional communications foregrounded relationships with technology- and digital-ecosystem actors, including Toyota Motor Corporation, PANDI, and PERURI. Within this single case, those partnerships were compatible with Telkom University's publicly communicated technology and innovation positioning. The ANTARA item demonstrates that the PERURI collaboration circulated outside the university's owned channels, but the present dataset does not establish whether that coverage originated independently or reproduced institutional public-relations material. Accordingly, the finding concerns external media exposure, not a measured increase in credibility.

Methodological Boundary: Internal Message Integration

Internal coordination between marketing and Public Relations cannot be established from public-facing content

alone. Differences in language register between formal partnership releases and recruitment-oriented materials are observable, but they are not evidence of organizational barriers or separate internal 'voices.' This issue is therefore treated as a methodological boundary and is addressed in the limitations and future-research section.

Comparison with Previous Studies and MPR Contribution

Overall, the findings show continuity with recent higher education MPR literature while providing a more specific case-based account of the Three Ways Strategy. (Wijaya & Krismiyati, 2013) examine MPR strategies for student intake in private universities, while (Wiwitan et al., 2024) identify organizational barriers in university Marketing Public Relations. The present study complements that work by organizing Telkom University's 2025 communication evidence explicitly through Harris's pull, push, and pass categories.

Three contextual patterns were observed in the Telkom University case. First, pull strategy included institution-owned narratives, experiential activities, and creator-mediated communication. Second, push strategy used direct outreach, student messengers, campus experience, and youth-oriented digital language. Third, pass strategy was represented by relationships with external institutional and industry actors, including technology- and digital-ecosystem partners. These patterns should be understood as a contextual empirical elaboration of the Three Ways Strategy in one private-university case, not as a new theoretical construct or a general model of technology-based higher education.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the evidence relies heavily on publicly accessible institutional and institution-linked content, creating a self-presentation bias because organizations select what they publish about themselves. Second, the broader screening pool was not preserved as an exhaustive corpus inventory across every Telkom University platform; the 11 items reported in the results therefore represent the retained analytical evidence rather than a complete census of 2025 communication. Third, the analysis was conducted without an independent second coder or formal intercoder-agreement statistic, so coding consistency rests on explicit category definitions, cross-source checking, and researcher interpretation. Fourth, interviews with institutional communication managers were not conducted, preventing direct verification of internal coordination between marketing and Public Relations units. Fifth, audience perceptions, credibility, persuasion, and conversion effects were not measured. Finally, this is a single-case study, so the findings are analytically transferable only with attention to contextual similarity and should not be generalized to all private or technology-oriented universities. Future research should combine a systematically archived corpus with independent coding, interviews with communication managers, and audience-based surveys or interviews.

Conclusion

Empirical contribution. The 2025 communication evidence analyzed in this study shows three forms of MPR implementation at Telkom University pull through achievement narratives, experiential programs, and creator-mediated communication; push through direct outreach, student messengers, campus experience, and youth-oriented language; and pass through partnerships and external stakeholder relationships, including technology- and digital-ecosystem actors. These are findings about MPR communication practices in one case and do not establish changes in audience perceptions, brand image, credibility, or enrollment.

The study provides a contextual empirical elaboration of Harris's (1991) Three Ways Strategy by showing how pull, push, and pass can be operationalized and observed in the public communication of one technology-oriented private university. The analysis does not propose a new MPR construct, claim that institutional typology determines MPR practice, or generalize the Telkom University pattern to other institutions.

Practical implication. For higher education MPR practitioners, the case illustrates the analytical value of distinguishing attraction-oriented communication, direct prospective-student engagement, and stakeholder-based communication while maintaining coherence with institutional positioning. Evaluation of MPR effectiveness should use additional audience, engagement, recruitment, or relationship data rather than infer outcomes from content alone. Future research can extend this case through systematically archived multi-platform corpora, independent coding, interviews with communication managers, and audience-response data.

Author Contribution

Fariq Muhajir Wiyandi contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data curation, formal analysis, and writing of the original draft. Yanti Setianti contributed to supervision, validation, and review and editing of the manuscript. Nindi Aristi contributed to supervision and review and editing of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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