PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT IN BUILDING A BRANDING IMAGE OF BOARDING SCHOOLS

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Abstract:

Public relations management is essential in building an educational institution's image. The image of an excellent educational institution can increase the attractiveness and trust of the community, parents of students, and prospective students. In this article, the author discusses how public relations management can help build the image of educational institutions. Some recommended strategies and tips have a strategic plan, using social media well, having an extensive network, and being responsive to requests and issues. The research method in this article uses a qualitative case study type method. By implementing excellent and integrated public relations management, educational institutions can build a good image and increase public trust in educational institutions. This can help educational institutions to attract the interest of prospective students and parents and improve the quality of education provided.

Keywords: *public relations management, image, pesantren*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools have proven their ability to survive and play an essential role in society and Indonesia, especially in education, even though there have been efforts to give a negative stigma to pesantren. History records that Islamic boarding schools defend national identity against colonialism and imperialism (Maghfuri & Rasmuin, 2019).

As an Indonesian educational institution, Islamic boarding schools have an essential role in building a human civilization in the fields of religion, society and technology. However, pesantren are also faced with issues regarding radical understandings that appear and are allegedly disseminated through pesantren (Djazilam, 2019).

If these issues are correctly handled, the image of the pesantren can grow, and people can leave the pesantren. Therefore, publications about Islamic boarding schools are significant, especially in providing the correct information about Islamic boarding schools to people who need to become more familiar with Islamic boarding schools. One way to do this publication is to build a positive image of pesantren. Thus, pesantren can continue to stand tall and play an essential role in building a human civilization in Indonesia (Naqqiyah, 2021).

In managing education marketing, building and managing the image is essential. This also applies to pesantren, which are already popular in society. The image of pesantren needs to be built and maintained correctly to maintain and increase public

interest in studying at pesantren, especially for pesantren that have just been established (Maulana et al., 2019).

Islamic boarding schools, as educational institutions, will try to minimize conflicts. Because the existence of this conflict will significantly impact the good relations between the Islamic boarding school and the community, which will ultimately be reflected in the public's perception of the image of the Islamic boarding school (Sofia, 2021).

The importance of the public relations position of an Islamic boarding school in improving good relations with the public is enormous, especially in efforts to build a positive image. Public relations functions as a management that assesses public attitudes, identifies individual or organizational policies and procedures with due regard to the public interest and plans actions to gain recognition from the public (Maulana, 2022).

In building the image, Islamic boarding schools can be formed through their identity, characteristics, or characteristics, both in physical forms such as mosque buildings, dormitories, schools, and non-physical forms such as curriculum, pesantren traditions, or the charismatic kiai. A person's assessment of an Islamic boarding school is based on the characteristics, characteristics, or identity of the pesantren, which becomes a consideration in choosing a pesantren (Madani & Marijan, 2021).

Forming and managing a good image of a pesantren has significant implications, not only for the institution but also for all. This can help remove the stigma of Islamic boarding schools as a place that strengthens the teachings of radicalism (Mustaan & Rifai, 2022). With a positive brand image, Islamic boarding schools will be more readily accepted and remembered by potential customers. In addition, they will be better able to survive crises than companies or educational institutions with a lousy image (Lelet et al., 2022).

Public Relations is a series of communication activities that strengthen understanding through knowledge. Meanwhile, public relations refers to a sustainable strategy deliberately designed to create mutual understanding between an institution or institution and the community. This is done to improve good relations and build a positive image of the institution or institutions in the public eye (Ferbita & Setianti, 2020).

There is a current reality where the relationship between pesantren and society is often not harmonious. Many factors cause this, and the relationship should be harmonious. If the pesantren do not have a good relationship with the community, then the community will be reluctant to give their aspirations to the institution. As a result, there needs to be more in the relationship between educational institutions and the public as education consumers. For this reason, the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School constantly evaluates the public relations and protocol department to improve the community's view of the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School.

In public relations performance, the main objective is to influence the public to feel concerned about and trust the institution and become graduates or users of the services offered. However, many agencies currently need more public trust in implementing their routine programs (Sihite & Saleh, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to the type of case study at Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid Paiton, Probolinggo. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation to obtain information about the role of public relations management in building the image of Islamic boarding schools. This interview was conducted in a semi-structured manner through the guardians of

students, students, and administrators at the Nurul Jadid Paiton Islamic Boarding School, Probolinggo, to seek information regarding public relations management and the image of the Islamic boarding school and matters related to the research theme. Documentation was obtained from observing the activities in the pesantren related to the management of the pesantren's public relations. This data analysis technique is carried out circularly, starting from data presentation, data reduction, and finally, the conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public Relations Management (PRM) is the process of planning, implementing and evaluating communication activities to create, maintain and enhance the image and reputation of an organization or individual. Public relations management is becoming increasingly important in today's digital era because information can spread quickly and widely via the internet and social media. The following are some of the strategies carried out by the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School to carry out effective public relations management:

The Strategic Plan

Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid has a strategic plan to build an image, an essential factor in enhancing the institution's image. A good strategic plan can assist Islamic boarding schools in identifying and formulating clear goals, developing effective strategies, and evaluating performance and results achieved.

The strategic plan made by the pesantren must include several things, such as vision, mission, values, and long and short-term goals. The vision and mission become a reference for the institution in determining the direction and focus of the activities. The values possessed by Islamic boarding schools can be the basis for building a good image, such as honesty, integrity, professionalism, and commitment to the quality of education.

In addition, in formulating strategic plans, institutions must consider internal and external factors that can affect the institution's image, such as the quality of teachers and staff, facilities, environment, educational programs, and the existing image. Strategic plans must also consider external factors such as public perception and competition.

After the strategic plan is made, the next step is to implement and evaluate the plan. Islamic boarding schools must have concrete actions by predetermined strategic plans, such as developing unique programs, improving the quality of teachers and staff, improving facilities and the environment, and improving communication with the community. Periodic evaluations must be carried out to measure the extent to which the strategic plan has been successfully achieved. If there are deficiencies or failures, improvements can be made immediately.

In the current digital era, social media has also become an essential platform for building the image of an institution. Institutions can utilize social media to promote programs and achievements that have been achieved, as well as establish interaction and communication with the public.

In conclusion, having a strategic plan to build an image is essential for educational institutions to improve their image. A good strategic plan must include a clear vision, mission, values and goals and consider internal and external factors affecting the institution's image. Implementation and evaluation of the strategic plan should also be carried out regularly to ensure its success. In the current digital era, social media can also be used to promote institutions and increase interaction with the public.

The beginning of implementing public relations programs and activities is to put knowledge and thoughts into planning as the first step to taking action. Planned action

will, of course, be much better than action taken just like that or even done haphazardly, especially if the plan is a strategic plan that pays attention to internal and external conditions so that strategic steps can be determined (Durahman, 2020).

Planning for Islamic boarding schools' marketing services begins with setting objectives and policies as a marketing services strategy. And procedures. Organizing Madrasas and Islamic Boarding Schools is in the form of committees. The implementation is carried out by dividing the work of the committee. Pesantren's public relations section carries out marketing control or supervision with initial, "concurrent" supervision and reflective supervision (Sopiali & Utomo, 2020).

Social Media

In today's increasingly advanced digital era, social media has become one of the most effective tools in building the image of an institution. The use of social media can assist institutions in creating brand awareness, increasing interaction with the public, and promoting programs and activities carried out by institutions.

Several strategies can be implemented to use social media effectively in building the institution's image. First, the institution must choose a social media platform that suits the target audience. Each social media platform has different characteristics and audiences, so institutions must choose the most relevant and effective platform to reach their target audience.

Second, institutions must have interesting and valuable content for their audience. Good content must promote the activities and programs of the institution, as well as provide added value for the audience. Content can be in the form of informative and exciting photos, videos, infographics, or articles.

Third, institutions must be consistent in posting content on social media. Consistency in posting content can help organizations build brand awareness and increase engagement with the public. However, consistency must also be balanced with good quality content so that the audience does not feel disturbed or that the content posted is too excessive.

Fourth, institutions should take advantage of social media features such as hashtags and tagging to increase the reach of their content. Hashtags and tagging can assist institutions in creating an active and engaged online community.

Fifth, institutions must respond quickly and well to questions and feedback received via social media. A good response can increase public trust in the institution and help improve the institution's image if there are problems or misunderstandings.

Lastly, institutions should also measure their social media performance regularly. Performance measurement can help agencies understand what is and is not working and provide the insights needed to improve their social media strategy in the future.

The use of social media can be a very effective tool in building the image of educational institutions. In making effective use of social media, institutions should choose a platform that suits their target audience, has exciting and valuable content, consistently posts content, uses social media features, responds well to feedback, and measures their performance regularly.

There need to be social media that can disseminate the information so that people can understand pesantren activities and preach Islam to the community. For social media management to work correctly, pesantren administrators must have good skills in managing social media (Ilhamuddin et al., (2021).

The community has a different impression of a pesantren institution. They can get this impression either from their experience while studying at the pesantren, simply hearing from those closest to them (word of mouth), or through information conveyed

by the pesantren in print and electronic media such as brochures, banners, and websites. , or electronic social media. This perception forms an impression created on each individual, referred to as an image (Ubaedullah, 2018).

Implementation of Islamic Boarding School marketing can be through public relations and information systems, cooperation with each other and establishing cohesiveness between pesantren internal parties in implementing Islamic Boarding School programs to facilitate the achievement of the desired goals; Islamic Boarding Schools must apply unique methods in providing educational services in order to attract community interest such as understanding community needs and provide customer satisfaction.

While the marketing techniques carried out by Islamic Boarding Schools in offering their products through the marketing mix strategy, namely (place, price, product and promotion). The existence of marketing carried out by Islamic boarding schools has a positive impact on the image of Islamic boarding schools, namely the increasing number of applicants as new students at Islamic boarding schools and the faster infrastructure development process at Islamic boarding schools (Aguustina, 2021).

Has a Wide Network

An extensive network can be a very effective strategy for building the image of an educational institution. An extensive network can assist institutions in creating good relationships with various parties, such as alumni, industry partners, and the surrounding community.

In building a broad network, institutions can carry several strategies. First, institutions can build relationships with various parties through events and activities. Events such as seminars, workshops and alumni meetings can be an excellent opportunity to invite various parties and build closer relationships.

Second, institutions can leverage social media and websites to build a more comprehensive network. By posting interesting and valuable content, institutions can attract the attention of various parties and expand their network.

Third, institutions can use alumni and industry partners with extensive networks. Alumni and industry partners can assist the institution in introducing the institution to prospective students, companies and the surrounding community.

Fourth, institutions can use apprenticeship programs and collaboration with companies to build a more comprehensive network. By sending students to do internships or work in companies, institutions can help students to expand their network and introduce institutions to these companies.

Finally, institutions can use CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activities to build good relations with the surrounding community. Through CSR activities, institutions can help local communities and strengthen their relationships with local communities.

An extensive network can be a very effective strategy for building the image of an educational institution. Institutions can take advantage of events and activities, social media and websites, alumni and industry partners, internship programs and collaboration with companies, and CSR activities in building a broad network. By expanding their network, institutions can increase their brand awareness and strengthen their institution's image in the public's eyes.

In achieving the target of Islamic boarding school marketing management, there are factors in marketing activities, namely marketing power in caregiver figures through the active involvement of alumni in the target areas. Whereas the Modern Assalam Islamic Boarding School through a network of alumni and student guardians and establishing regional information centres throughout Indonesia (Sopiali & Utomo,

2020).

In order to optimize the performance of public relations, the coordination of public relations and the press must also be built in such a way because the press is very effective in building public opinion through a reasonably extensive publication network. Thus, public relations will be able to socialize well if the relationship development continues (Ningsih & Martha 2019).

As has been implemented by Islamic boarding schools that adhere to a modern system, independence can make Islamic boarding schools stand without depending on any party. That is, in Islamic boarding school economic activities, especially in khizatullah or the provision of funding sources for Islamic boarding schools, can empower the entire Islamic boarding school community to run the wheels of the economy, the education system, to expand the network of any party (Azizah, 2014).

Responsive To Requests And Issues

Responsiveness to requests and developing issues can be a very effective strategy in building the image of educational institutions. Institutions must be able to keep up with developments and respond to various issues in a world that is constantly changing and developing rapidly.

One way to be responsive to requests and issues is to pay attention to trends and developments in the field of education. Institutions must always keep abreast of the latest developments in education, such as technological developments, new learning methods, or changes in government policies related to education.

In addition, institutions must also always be open to requests and input from various parties, such as students, parents, alumni, and the surrounding community. By listening to input and requests from various parties, institutions can develop themselves and meet the needs and expectations of stakeholders.

In addition to being responsive to requests, institutions must also be able to respond to various issues that develop. Security, sustainability or social issues can be essential, and agencies must respond quickly and appropriately.

In responding to various issues, institutions must communicate effectively and transparently with stakeholders. Institutions must provide clear and accurate information about the issue and solutions or actions taken to deal with the issue.

In conclusion, being responsive to requests and issues can be a very effective strategy in building the image of an educational institution. In being responsive, institutions must keep abreast of developments and trends in education, be open to input and requests from stakeholders, and be able to respond to various issues that develop effectively and transparently. Thus, institutions can strengthen their image in society's eyes and increase stakeholders' trust.

Islamic education in Indonesia continues and experiences changes; changes in the field of education are a necessity that requires educational actors and observers to be wise in dealing with all kinds of problems and challenges of future changes (Jemani & Zamroni, 2020).

In addition, the role of guardians of students has yet to be seen optimally, especially in providing input and actively overseeing the development of madrasas or Islamic boarding schools (Yunus et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

In the article about public relations management in building the image of educational institutions, it can be concluded that public relations management plays a vital role in enhancing the image of educational institutions. Public relations

management can help educational institutions to build a positive image and increase attractiveness to the public, parents of students, and prospective students.

Some strategies and tips recommended in public relations management are having a strategic plan, using social media well, having an extensive network, being responsive to requests and issues, and conducting evaluations. In addition, other factors such as good academic performance, quality extracurricular programs, quality of school teachers and staff, quality of school facilities and environment, and effective communication with the community can also affect the image of an educational institution.

Improving the image of educational institutions requires time, effort and commitment from all related parties. In this case, public relations management can be one of the critical factors in building a good image of an educational institution and attracting interest from prospective students and parents of students.

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