



THE PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM'S STRATEGY IN IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT AND REPUTATION AT MTSN 1 PASER

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Abstract:

This research aims to analyze the strategies implemented by the public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser in improving student achievement, both in academic and non-academic fields. In the era of globalization and advances in information technology, effective communication is one of the key factors in supporting the achievement of an educational institution. The research approach used was qualitative with a case study method, which involved in-depth interviews with members of the public relations team, school principals, as well as students and parents as key informants. The collected data was then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify communication patterns and strategies used by the public relations team. The research results show that the public relations strategy implemented by MTsN 1 Paser includes strengthening internal communication through regular meetings with stakeholders, effective social media management, and involving parents in various school activities. Through these strategies, students' academic and non-academic achievements have increased significantly, although there are still several challenges related to limited budgets and human resources. It is hoped that this research can provide insight for education managers in optimizing the role of public relations as part of efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Public Relations Strategy, Achievements, Accomplishments, Communication, MTsN 1 Paser, Parent Participation*

INTRODUCTION

Along with the advancement of time, the education system in Indonesia has undergone significant changes, both in terms of curriculum, teaching methods, and the role of parents and the community in supporting the learning process. In this era of globalization, where information technology is rapidly developing, communication has become one of the key factors in shaping the image and achievements of an educational institution. One of the essential elements in achieving this is the role of the public relations team. The public relations team plays a vital role in establishing good relationships between the school, students, parents, and the surrounding community. Through effective communication, the public relations team is expected to optimize the participation of the community and other stakeholders in supporting the success of education in the school.

At MTsN 1 Paser, public relations strategies have become an important focus in efforts to improve student achievements in various fields, both academic and non-academic. These achievements are not only measured by academic grades but also by the success of students in extracurricular activities and involvement in social programs. Schools in Indonesia, especially at the junior high school level, often face challenges in improving the quality of education and student achievement, especially in terms of limited funds and human resources. Therefore, the communication strategies implemented by the public relations team have a significant impact in overcoming these barriers.

The role of the public relations team in schools is not limited to providing information but also acting as a mediator between the school and external parties, such as parents, the media, and the community. This is especially important given that the community is increasingly critical of educational developments and more active in providing feedback on the quality of teaching and school activities. In this context, public relations serve as the frontline that connects various parties with interests in the school's development, and in turn, can influence public perception of the achievements of students at MTsN 1 Paser.

One of the communication strategies implemented by the public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser is the use of social media as a platform to disseminate information and interact with the community. In the digital era, social media has become a highly effective and efficient communication tool. Information shared via social media not only includes academic achievements but also school activities involving students and parents. This strategy allows the school to reach more people in a shorter period, thus raising awareness and increasing community participation in the activities conducted by the madrasa.

Reputation is a judgment, either good or bad, that develops over time. Reputation in Islamic institutions, especially in madrasas, is closely related to finances, emotions, social, and cultural aspects between the institution and the community, both internally and externally. Reputation is an important asset that every institution must have as proof of its existence and quality. The reputation of the school reflects the quality of education and the achievements of the madrasa, serving as an indicator of the success of the educational program.

Responses to the image of the madrasa manifest in perceptions, realities, and public opinions. Over time, the process of building the madrasa's reputation requires significant time and effort, as it involves managing opportunities, obstacles, and challenges effectively. The public relations team plays a role in handling reputation and can offer brilliant ideas for improving future reputation. A proper and beneficial strategy is a means to achieve the desired reputation and success.

Sandra Olivier (2007: 4) states that public relations is the management of an organization's reputation. Public relations identify the existence of the organization and communicate its activities to relevant audiences. Public relations elevate the reputation and achievements based on performance. Public relations have functions and roles in managing reputation and must offer brilliant ideas to improve future reputation. An appropriate and effective strategy is the key to obtaining the desired reputation. Public relations understand the perceptions held by Islamic educational institutions, especially madrasas, and provide information about the performance of an institution to the broader public. Reputation is a judgment that does not necessarily have to

be good but should reflect what the institution deserves. A positive reputation of an Islamic educational institution, especially a madrasa, is the result of the actual work of the public relations team within the institution.

Another effort made by the public relations team is strengthening relationships with local media. By establishing good cooperation with the media, MTsN 1 Paser can gain positive publicity regarding the various achievements of its students. This publicity aims not only to promote achievements but also to strengthen the school's reputation in the eyes of the broader community. A good relationship with the media also facilitates the school in obtaining support from various parties, whether from the government, the community, or sponsors who can contribute to the advancement of the madrasas.

However, despite the implementation of various communication strategies, challenges still exist in the public relations practices at MTsN 1 Paser. One of the main challenges is the limited budget available to the school. This limitation affects the availability of facilities and resources that can be used to carry out public relations activities optimally. Furthermore, the human resources involved in the public relations team also have limitations in terms of communication skills necessary to manage various communication channels effectively. Therefore, training and capacity building for public relations team members are needed to work more efficiently and professionally.

The importance of the public relations team in improving achievements at MTsN 1 Paser is also inseparable from the influence of the relationship established between the school and the surrounding community. Schools that maintain good relationships with the community tend to find it easier to garner support and participation in school activities. In this context, public relations serves as a link between the school and the community, ensuring that the programs launched can run smoothly and receive positive responses from the community. Furthermore, a good relationship with the community will create a positive image for the school, which can lead to an increase in the number of new student registrations and improved student achievements.

This research aims to identify and analyze the various strategies applied by the public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser in improving student achievements. Using a qualitative approach and a case study method, this research is expected to provide a clearer picture of the role of the public relations team in creating effective communication within the school environment and its impact on improving student achievements. The results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of public relations practices in educational institutions, particularly in efforts to improve the quality and achievements of education in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

Understanding in-depth the public relations team's strategy in improving achievements at MTsN 1 Paser. A qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of this research is to explore the experiences, perspectives, and practices applied by the public relations team in a specific context. A case study allows the researcher to explore the phenomenon in depth within a particular scope, namely the role of the public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser (Yin, 2014). The primary data in this study were obtained through in-depth interviews with members of the public relations team, the school principal, students, and parents as key informants, as well as observations of activities carried out by the

public relations team.

Data collection was carried out using three main methods: semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews allowed for a more flexible yet focused exploration of the communication strategies used by the public relations team (Patton, 2015). Participatory observation was conducted by following the activities carried out by the public relations team to understand how these communication strategies were implemented in practice. Additionally, document analysis included reviewing the school's annual reports, activity documentation, and student achievement data, which helped strengthen the validity of the research findings.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis as per Braun and Clarke's guidelines (2006). The analysis steps included reading the data repeatedly, identifying key themes, and organizing those themes to understand emerging patterns. Data validity was ensured through method triangulation, which involves comparing data from interviews, observations, and documents to ensure consistency and credibility of the research results (Creswell, 2014). The analysis results are expected to provide comprehensive insights into the role of the public relations team in building the school's image and improving student achievements at MTsN 1 Paser.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Strategic Role of the Public Relations Team in Education

The public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser plays a strategic role in supporting the success of the school, especially in improving student achievements. As a bridge between the school, parents, and the community, the public relations team is responsible for effectively communicating information about educational programs and the achievements of students to the public. This role involves careful communication planning and execution that aligns with the needs of the audience.

Effective Internal Communication

One of the main strategies of the public relations team is to strengthen internal communication within the school. Good internal communication helps create synergy between the school principal, teachers, staff, and students in achieving shared goals. Regular meetings involving all parties are used as forums to share information, evaluate programs, and design better strategies.

Utilization of Social Media

In the digital age, social media has become a very effective communication tool. The public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser utilizes platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to communicate information about student achievements, school agendas, and extracurricular activities. The use of social media allows the team to reach a wider audience quickly and efficiently.

Promotion of Student Achievements

Student achievements, both academic and non-academic, are regularly promoted by the public relations team through social media, the school's website, and local print media. This not only boosts student motivation but also strengthens the school's positive image in the eyes of the public. These promotions are accompanied by visual documentation such as photos and videos that attract attention.

Strengthening Relationships with Parents

The public relations team actively involves parents through regular

meetings, seminars, and discussion forums. This involvement aims to build parents' trust in the school's educational programs and encourage them to support their children in achieving success.

Educational Socialization Activities

The public relations team conducts educational outreach, including raising awareness about the importance of education, the role of parents, and the values instilled at the school. These activities are carried out through seminars, workshops, and the distribution of brochures. This step strengthens public awareness of their contributions to the success of student education.

Collaboration with Local Media

The public relations team builds good relationships with local media to publish positive news about MTsN 1 Paser. This collaboration allows the school to gain wider media coverage, making the public more aware of the school's achievements and flagship programs.

Development of Extracurricular Activities

Through collaboration with extracurricular activity instructors, the public relations team helps promote non-academic activities such as sports, arts, and scouting. This aims to highlight student achievements outside of academics, further improving the school's reputation.

Evaluation of Communication Strategies

The public relations team regularly evaluates the effectiveness of their communication strategies. Evaluations are carried out through surveys of students and parents to assess their satisfaction with the information provided and the impact of these strategies on student motivation.

Integration of Information Technology

The public relations team also integrates information technology into data management and communication. The use of digital-based applications helps streamline information management and increase efficiency.

Organizing School Events

The public relations team plays an important role in designing and organizing school events, such as competitions, exhibitions, and seminars. These events not only boost student enthusiasm but also strengthen the relationship between the school and the surrounding community.

Role of Public Relations in New Student Admissions

Public relations strategies also contribute to attracting prospective new students. Information about the advantages of MTsN 1 Paser, including student achievements and school facilities, is widely publicized during the new student admission period.

Enhancing Public Relations Team Competencies

To support the implementation of effective strategies, members of the public relations team regularly attend training and workshops on communication, social media management, and public relations management.

Impact of Public Relations Strategies on the School's Image

The implementation of public relations strategies has led to a significant improvement in the school's image. This can be seen from the increase in new student enrollments, community participation, and recognition of the school's achievements at both regional and national levels.

Contribution to Student Achievements

Overall, the public relations strategies implemented at MTsN 1 Paser have proven to contribute to the improvement of student achievements,

including increased motivation to learn, active participation in extracurricular activities, and academic success.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser plays a highly strategic role in supporting the improvement of student achievements through effective communication. By implementing various communication strategies, such as strengthening internal relationships, utilizing social media, and publishing student achievements, the public relations team has successfully built a positive image of the school and increased student motivation to excel. The results of the study show that social media has become the primary communication channel, allowing the public relations team to efficiently reach a wider audience. In addition, parental involvement through regular meetings and discussion forums also significantly contributes to creating a learning environment that supports student development.

The strategies implemented by the public relations team not only impact academic achievement but also the development of students' non-academic skills, such as sports, arts, and other extracurricular activities. Strong relationships with local media have also helped publicize the school's successes, thus strengthening the reputation of MTsN 1 Paser at both the local and national levels. However, this study also identifies several challenges in the implementation of communication strategies, such as budget limitations and a lack of trained human resources. Therefore, greater support from the school management is needed to ensure the sustainability of these strategies.

The final conclusion of this study is that well-planned and integrated public relations strategies have a significant impact on the improvement of student achievements and the school's image. By leveraging information technology, strengthening internal communication, and building strong relationships with parents and the community, the public relations team at MTsN 1 Paser has succeeded in creating an educational ecosystem conducive to student development. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for other schools in optimizing the role of public relations as a strategic effort to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

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