

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY TO CREATE SCHOOL BRANDING IN PASUNDAN 1 AND 2 MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN BANDUNG CITY

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Abstract

Excellent schools with the best quality cannot be separated from tight competition and school managerial abilities so that they come out as champions with the branding of their favorite schools. Branding strategy plays an important role in filling formal education towards globalization as is done by SMP Pasundan 1 and 2, Bandung City. This private school provides future-oriented educational options that integrate the advantages of Sundanese culture, religion, and academic and non-academic achievements. This study explores how the implementation of planning, public relations strategy, and school branding by the two schools. This study analyzes the public relations managerial strategy in building an image through the concept of school branding with a descriptive qualitative approach, data obtained by interviews, observations, and literature studies. The results of the study revealed, the implementation of a public relations managerial strategy was carried out by school leaders, and school resources were able to build branding in the community. A systematic public relations management strategy through social media publicity, print, electronic, and educational communication packaging, to build a positive image of schools, students, and excellent schools which always have high public interest every year.

Keywords: Strategy; Public Relations Management; and School Branding.

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INTRODUCTION

Formal education in the millennial era continues to develop and metamorphose on the basis of information and communication technology (Agung Tri Wibowo, Isa Aklis, 2014). Even though its movement is still haunted by the pressure of Covid-19 with the new Omicron variant which is 70 times faster than Delta, education is not to give up on any one condition (Cahyani, et al., 2020). The shift in the educational model from face-to-face learning (PTM) to the virtual domain is a reality of life that must be realized. Like it or not, the virtual world is becoming part of the new normal in the world of education. The hope, this model does not reduce the quality of learning for students and continues to provide the best for national education (Angga Sugiarto, 2020).

The virtual education model is certainly felt by all public and private educational institutions. Likewise, superior or favorite schools, especially private schools have long been known by the community. There is concern that the flagship school will lose its image as a favorite school due to the pandemic. So that various steps and efforts have been made to maintain school branding so that it continues to exist in the hearts of the community (Karsono, et al, 2021). The formation of flagship schools is of course not easy and goes through a long process with various obstacles and intense competition. Therefore, the inherent positive image must be maintained and fought for. The branding that is carried still crosses the minds of the public (Jamaluddin, 2020). Therefore, a strategy is needed in accordance with the cultural conditions of the community so that the branding that is owned does not fade as a school identity. The learning process with the best quality and graduate results is what we desire even though we have to compete with each other (Utaminingsih, 2020).

Branding for private schools is very important with the main objective of building the quality image of the best school graduates (Sholihah, 2018). The ability of school management in school governance and quality assurance is important in the spirit of school institutions. This means that schools provide the best education for their students, not only limited to academic achievements but more than that they form noble morals for their students (Afriansyah, 2019).

Islam has taught its people that every human being who is knowledgeable according to God's promise will be increased in rank. Word of Allah SWT in Qs. Almujaadillah: 11, Mankanya, O you who believe, when it is said to you: "Make room in the assembly," surely Allah will open up space for you. And if it is said: "Stand up," then stand up, Allah will exalt those who believe among you and those who are given knowledge by degrees. And Allah is All-Knowing of what you do (Qs. Almujaadillah: 11).

The word of God teaches us to be able to make an educational institution, namely a school as a *candradimuka* crater in forming good people starting with measurable teaching and learning, student learning satisfaction, student achievement, future-oriented quality of education, good morals, and quality. outcome that was born (Wulandari & Nugroho, 2020). As a result, every private school institution is able to provide the best education for its students and the benefits to the community will make a deep impression on both students and their parents. Students and the community will get school values (branding) which will get awards from each parent. That is, this space is used as an opportunity by schools to target "customers" as the next target of the education market ((Santoso, 2012). This is where the role of school public relations is not underestimated because the existence of public relations will also determine the branding of the school's reputation in society (Setyanto, Y, P.T. Anggarina, & Valentina, 2017).

School awareness in implementing public relations management (PR) in building harmonious relations with the public both internally and externally. Fostering two-way communication between school and community, social media, newspaper media, and online, so that the purpose of the messages reaches the expected target. In addition, it can identify and analyze educational opinions that develop in society, the ability to hear and aspirations of the community, and be skilled in translating leadership education policies (Zulkarnain, 2010). Public Relations is the locomotive of the school organization and the spearhead in enhancing the image of the institution which must be managed professionally and in a systematic manner. The aim is to ensure that the school's good reputation can be conveyed to the public (Basit, 2019).

In Islamic literature, the word "Humas" means "habl" which means "rope or relationship" or "silaturahmi". While the word habl as the word of God, which means; "They are filled with humiliation wherever they are unless they have a relationship with (religion) Allah and have a relationship with fellow human beings..." (QS. Ali Imran [3]: 112).

From the characteristics above, public relations in building a superior school branding can be interpreted as a management activity that is concentrated on two-way communication between schools and the community. The pattern that is built is harmonization, knowing each other, deliberation, cooperation, and symbiosis of mutualism with various elements of society. Another goal is to be able to control the quality of the best graduates produced (Mustika, 2020). Sholihah said that strategies needed to be carried out to carry out school branding for school institutions, including; a) Improving leadership performance in schools, teachers, and education personnel. b) extracurricular external student activities, c). Building networking between parents and the community, d). professional academic services, and e). school academic achievement (Sholihah, 2018).

From the initial observations, it is known that the imaging technique for superior schools is not only to build branding consistently throughout the year but also as a place for evaluating schools against deficiencies to be corrected and maintain the achievements that have been achieved. According to Mustika, building branding apart from increasing public trust does not mean covering up weaknesses, but proving to the public the ability of school institutions to be credible and able to establish communication with components of society at large. Thus, good things have been done and deserve to be known by the public as the true reality (Mustika, 2020).

The grand tour in the field which is the object of study as a leading private school by the community in Bandung, is how the school's branding is embedded in the community. It is considered important to know that the success of the important role of public relations has been implemented by private school organizations with the pre-eminent label in the community. The focus of the study was on Pasundan 1 Middle School (SMP) and Pasundan 2 Middle School in Bandung City. The adjoining school is located on Jl. Pasundan No. 32, Balonggede, Kec. Regol, Bandung City, West Java 40251, but each is different in terms of school management, and both have been called the favorite private school by the people in Bandung.

SMP Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung are excellent schools in the fields of: Academic Achievement Sports Achievement Tahfidz Art Achievement So that which becomes characteristic of PASONE PINTER. Achievement, Innovative, Educative, and Religious. Meanwhile, SMP Pasundan 2 is better known historically since 1962 the name SMP PARKI II has changed to SMP Pasundan 2 Bandung until now. In 1964 SMP Pasundan 2 Bandung obtained SUBSIDIZED status with the Decree of the Minister of P.D&K no: 20314/B.S./B.I. December 24, 1964. Thus Pasundan 2 Middle School has reached the top level in the private school status system, namely subsidized private schools are valued on the same level as public schools. Therefore, in this context, the title taken is "Public Relations Management Strategy for Creating Branding Schools in Pasundan 1 and 2 Junior High Schools in the City of Bandung".

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative model, because the studies studied are more qualitatively compatible, so the results achieved in this study more clearly describe the object under study. In the research process in the field, namely, case studies emphasize the study of public relations management (PR) strategies in reconstructing the embodiment of school branding programs in superior schools which, according to Moleong (2012), qualitatively aims to understand the phenomena experienced by subjects with behavior, attitudes, motivation, subject's perception, and action. Denim (2010), said that qualitative research is constructive and interactive, which is nothing but dynamic truth. Likewise, Creswell (2017) says, qualitative is the study of human and social problems and the results are reported in view or perception and analysis of data obtained in the field to then be described in detail.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public Relations Management Strategy to Create A Branding School

The results of an interview with the leadership of the Pasundan 1 Middle School Bandung school, that the learning process at Pasundan 1 Middle School still refers to the 2013 curriculum that has been set by the government, in this case, the Ministry of Education and Culture. Learning remains centered on our students. However, the constructive educational process within the scope of the school is different, namely the development of learning into a learning culture that must be owned by every student. Through this learning process, better cognitive affective and psychomotor abilities of children will be created.

In the context of a branding school, which is the community's trust to send their children to that institution, this cannot be separated from the strategic steps built by the school and the harmonization of the relationship between the school and (the student's parents) or the community. One of them is through the active role of public relations (PR) so that it gets a place in the minds of the people of Bandung City. The findings of a study of public relations management strategies in building school branding images at Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung Junior High Schools, refer to the problems found that strategic management planning, implementation of public relations strategies, and their results can build a positive image of schools in society.

The reality that is happening is the public relations management strategy implemented with a humanist educative approach program towards the public starting from planning the progress of public relations, implementing the program to the targets so that the Pasundan Middle School branding school is built in the community. The following is an illustration of the implementation of the public relations program, namely;

Strategic Public Relations Planning in Building Branding School

The initial findings at the planning stage of school branding activities in schools were preceded by reforms in structured school management. This is done to build a work culture from the work team so that it remains solid in order to implement every school progress plan. All management support teams in each field must be varied and innovative according to needs so that they can easily implement the strategies planned by the school's public relations department.

Strategy implementation begins with continuous coordination with school leadership to empower public relations potential supported by the unit division of human resources, educational staff, and administration, which then develops a work program and public relations strategy with a time schedule that ensures it is ripe for implementation by the work team. After that, the next step is to prepare media or tools, and supporting materials to implement marketing strategies with structured promotion and outreach to determine targets that are considered appropriate so that they are effective and efficient when carrying out a public relations program. See Figure 1. Public relations planning management strategy in school promotion and outreach.

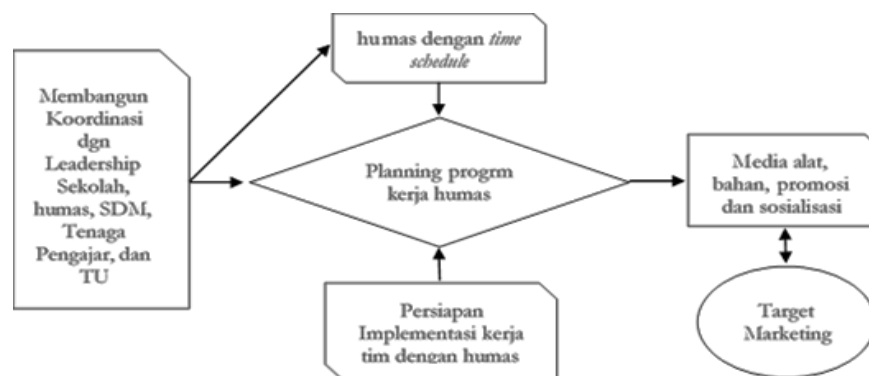


Figure 1. Implementation of the Public Relations Management Strategy for SMP Pasundan 1 Bandung

Implementation of Public Relations Branding School Management Strategy

Implementation of the program strategy, can be explained, among others; previously held coordination meetings regarding school work programs on a regular basis, the role of public relations in communicating both externally and internally, implementing what has become the school program agenda, packaging teaching excellence programs based on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) which are communicated to various parties through various collaboration with partner institutions of school institutions, organizing school and outside school events, and social service to promote the institution as well as developing students' interests and talents, participating schools and students to take part in various events outside of school, publication of activities on social media, such as WhatsApp, Facebooks, Instagram, Telegram, Print and electronic media, Youtube, Videotron, and billboards, then making advertisements in electronic print media, radio, television, pamphlets, brochures, banners, and copy mornings with parents or community members.

The Impact Resulting from The Branding School Public Relations Management Strategy

The findings in the field can be described that the impact of the public relations management strategy carried out by the school public relations sector is known, among others; that school branding is easily recognized by the community and is more familiar, a good impact is an increase in acceptance before student enrollment opens every new school year. The image that has been built in society is very positive, the school's vision and mission goals reach the community that schools have their own advantages, increasing public trust in schools and local government support for private schools, and establishing school branding as a quality and superior private school.

The Results of The Research on The Branding School Public Relations Management Strategy

The results of the interview with the leadership of the Pasundan 2 Bandung Middle School school, said that the school's public relations management strategy in forming the school's image branding refers to the promotion strategy planning used, then with various approaches and persuasive efforts related to education by utilizing various online and offline media, electronic media print, radio, and television, as well as other media tools, which aim to convey the message on target. An overview of the school's public relations management strategy continues from the initial design to the results obtained and provides a school bag value from the concept of a public relations management strategy in building a branding school, including;

Planning Action Strategy Management Public Relations School Branding

According to the leadership of SMP Pasundan 2 Bandung, public relations is the face of the school in society, bad public relations means the institution is bad. Because of this, a public relations strategy is needed in processing school program branding, so that the message conveyed can be accepted by the community. In addition, the Pasundan Elementary and secondary education foundation (YPDM) participates in it, especially in guaranteeing the quality of school education. Action planning is preceded by the coordinator between quality assurance and the school principal who is then delegated through brainstorming in a meeting attended by all team members in the public relations division, teachers, and Administration, to develop a sustainable public relations strategy which is evaluated annually. This is to see how far the development of school branding has been implemented so that it can change the next plan starting from budgeting funds, time schedules, and public relations with the team to focus more on promoting the school brand, excellence, school image in the midst of society through various tools that exist and are not foreign to the public. See Figure 2. Public relations planning management strategy in the promotion and socialization of SMP Pasundan 2 Bandung.

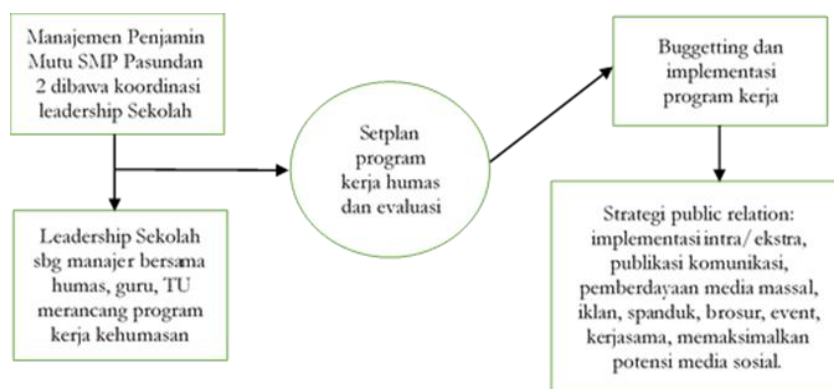


Figure 2. Planning Action Management Strategy for Public Relations at SMP Pasundan 2 Bandung

Implementation of Public Relations Management Strategy to Build School Branding

According to the leadership of SMP Pasundan 2, the implementation of certain community relations strategies will have a positive effect on the school when it is carried out with comprehensive coordination among divisions and must be interdependent so that it is integrated as a whole. Thus, what needs to be built is fostering coordination with parents or guardians of students, building friendship through school activities with parents, publication of all student achievements through various mass media and social media, achieving A accreditation, excellence in schools based on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), the quality of the teaching staff is balanced by religion, student achievement, and students to be sensitive to the surrounding environment.

In the promotion aspect, the social media approach continues to be carried out, such as making short documentary film programs made by students, then uploading them to domains such as FB, WA, Instagram, Youtube, Videotron, and Telegram. In addition, advertisements and print media, radio, TV, brochures, banners, and educative education directly to the public through various social service activities for schools and students. In fact, every extracurricular activity internal and external to the student's school has involved the guidance of the student's guardian teacher, as well as the existence of various school collaborations with other institutions that invite community leaders and local government officials to be held in the school environment.

The Positive Impact of The Public Relations Management Strategy in Building A Branding School

The positive impact of building a branding school by Public Relations of SMP Pasundan 2 Bandung, among others; the establishment of a favorite image and the interest of the community, the excess number of students enrolling each year, schools with Sundanese culture, religious with intelligence, morality, achievement, and care for the environment, and a high sense of public trust in the quality and superior private school institutions.

Based on field research and analysis, the findings of researchers at SMP Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung, regarding the public relations management strategy in building branding schools implemented by the two schools, and citing the concept of management strategy, that the program developed is one of the determinants of school success in building branding school in the community.

The results of research conducted at Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung Middle School, regarding the public relations strategy in building a branding school, it can be seen that both of them have done a good design. The public relations strategy of the two schools has been programmed, planned, and the implementation of the public relations strategy is running according to the program that was designed from the start. This can be seen from the impact the results have given

added value to the school so that the favorite image of the two schools has been built in the community.

All the success of the institution apart from the existence of school leadership that is concerned with the development of future school education, as well as the solidity of the work team from all divisions that have designed work programs, namely the teachers involved, administration and all school components involved, so that the implementation of the public relations strategy in building school branding at SMP Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung, it can be said to be successful with all the achievements so far.

The direction of education built by Pasundan 1 and 2 Middle Schools in the City of Bandung has an important impact on the development of education in the City of Bandung, which was built by private schools. The positive value is being able to elaborate between Sundanese culture, religion, formal education, and synergy with the surrounding community. SMP Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung, has proven that school branding is not only formed with imagery alone but must have a positive impact on the progress of student education and on all academics so that educational results can benefit life.

From the results of the study and analysis of the researchers, there was a breakthrough in the new concept of a public relations management strategy in building branding schools in private schools.

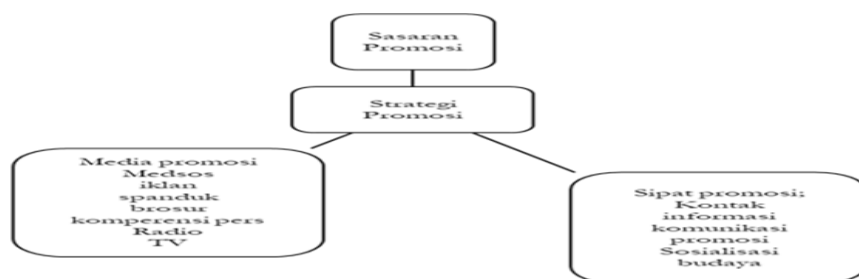


Figure 3. Public Relations Management Strategy

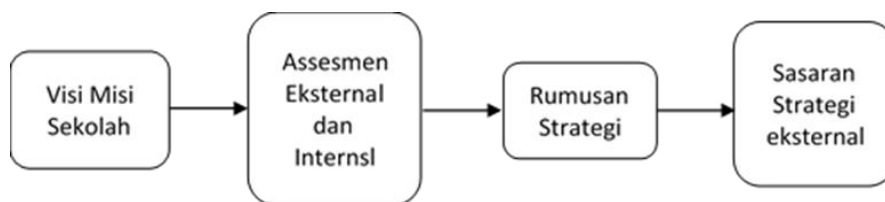


Figure 4. The Public Relations Management Strategy Formulation Process

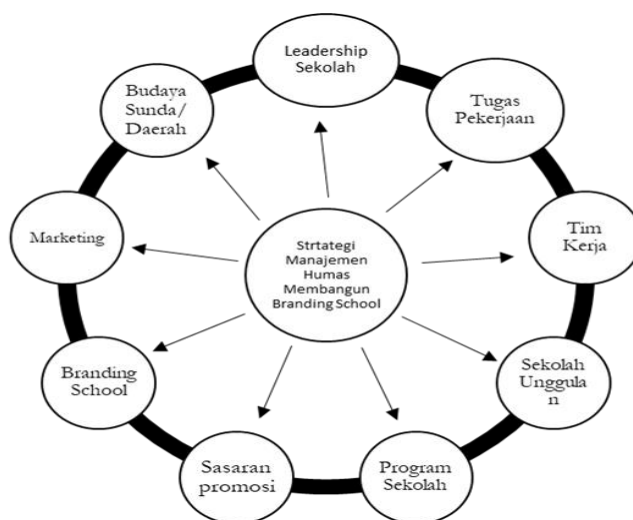


Figure 5. Model of Public Relations Management Strategy for Branding School, SMP Pasundan 1 and 2 Bandung

CONCLUSION

The public relations strategy in building school branding by the two schools illustrates that education management, consistency, and solidity from all divisions of school education development are going well, which are integrated religiously, Sundanese culture and the environment, and are supported by school leadership policies and YPDM Pasundan who are concerned with future education and make education a provision of knowledge for students at the next level of education.

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