

# SCHOOL PUBLIC STRATEGY IN INCREASING COMMUNITY TRUST ON IMAGE OF SMK ARINA SIDIKALANG

Ilyas Suharto Sitorus  
Staff at the Library and Archive North Sumatra Province  
Serviceilyassitorus@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** this study aims to find out how the strategies, obstacles and supporting factors, and the results achieved by the vice headmaster public relation of SMK Arina Sidikalang in the field of public relations in creating a school image and to increase public interest in the school. This study uses a qualitative approach, it is based on the intention to describe the behavior of informants, namely public relations, principals, and school committees according to existing social situations. The subjects of this study were the deputy head of the public relations sector, the principal, and the school committee. Data collection techniques are interviews, documentation and supported by using audio record aids, and photo cameras. This study uses an analysis of the Milles and Huberman models consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that: a) the strategy undertaken is understanding the internal and external conditions of the school, improving physical and non-physical conditions of the school, and introducing the school to the community, b) supporting factors are cooperating with alumni, awareness of government, foundations and all school members to support the school's image. While the inhibiting factor is the double duty as a teacher and deputy principal in the field of public relations, and the limitations of facilities and infrastructure in the field of public relations, c) the work done by representatives of the public relations sector is to realize quality schools, improve the quality of public education, multicultural school climate as an activity center learning and achievement and increasing public trust in the existence of the school.

**Keywords:** Public Relations, public interest, school image

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of public relations is very important for an organization/institution, both small-scale organizations/institutions and large-scale organizations/institutions. The most important role is to create a good image and keep it always good. The image is needed by the institution so that the community gives appreciation as well as the reputation and achievement that will be achieved for the world of public relations. Therefore the fruit image of the institution is very important and must be maintained in order to remain good in the eyes of the public both internally and externally.

Broadly speaking the image is a set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions of a person towards a particular object. A person's attitude and actions towards an object will be determined by the image of the object that displays its best condition (Rosady Ruslan, 2008).

For that, the image must be managed properly through a harmonious relationship with the public or the public, considering the institution's image is a reflection of the identity of the institution. The image of educational institutions is formed based on various components including academic reputation or academic quality can be done by improving the professional performance of principals, teachers and related staff in schools, having good organizational networks for teachers and parents, and a clear curriculum to create good graduates too. In order for the community to know the good and bad of the institution, the role of public relations is needed as a mouthpiece from the institution.

According to Harsono in Rachmadi's book "Public Relations". Public Relations are generally interpreted as all activities carried out by an institution or organization, and business entities through Public relations officers to formulate an organization or structure and communication to create better mutual understanding between institutions and their audiences (people who must always be contacted) Public relations can be seen as a tool or medium to create relationships with anyone who is considered to be able to bring benefits and progress to the organization or institution concerned (Rahmadi, 1992)

The purpose of public relations is to improve communication between one school and the community through the help of staff members in analyzing and understanding the conditions of the family (home) and the environment of their students (Wahjosumidjo, 2003)

The importance of public relations must be realized not only by the leadership of the organization or the one who handles it, but also must be realized by all units in the organization / institution itself. A research conducted by Ewing (2019) on public relations management in building the image of schools in Yosonegoro Magetan Vocational School. From the results of Afandi's research, it shows how all elements of school stakeholders together in building the image of the school by implementing management principles; planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring.

Survey that researcher conducted in July 2019 that Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School is a new School in Dairi Regency, which was established in 2015, located on Jl. Empat Lima of Sidikalang, Dairi Regency. Since the beginning of this school, the public interest in SMK Arina Sidikalang School was very high, seen from the number of students in the first class consisting of 7 (seven) classes. This shows the high public trust in SMK Arina Sidikalang. Based on my initial observations that the achievements achieved by SMK Arina Sidikalang from the field of education such

as the English and Indonesian debate competition, are very good seen from the nominations achieved by the students starting from the regency, even province levels. Likewise with the teachers in this school, it was noted that in 2017 there were 3 (three) teachers who were representatives of Dairi regency following the Provincial Level Achievement Teacher Election Competition as quoted on page [http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/news/read/2017/07/11/309468/guru\\_smk\\_wakil\\_dairi\\_untuk\\_seleksi\\_guru/](http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/news/read/2017/07/11/309468/guru_smk_wakil_dairi_untuk_seleksi_guru/)

Furthermore, in 2019, one of the SMK Arina Sidikalang teacher was also elected as the second winner of high school achievement teachers in North Sumatra Province. Thus, even though SMK Arina Sidikalang is still classified as a new school, the image of the school is familiar to the community so that the image of the school is considered good by the community so that the community competes to enter their children to SMK Arina Sidikalang.

Table 1. The number of students registration in the Arina Vocational School 5 (five) years

No	Academic year	Registrars		
		M	F	M/F
1	2015/2016	44	126	165
2	2016/2017	44	102	146
3	2017/2018	63	120	183
4	2018/2019	85	108	193
5	2019/2020	94	180	274

Source: Basic Education Data of SMK Arina Sidikalang

Based on table 1, it can be seen that the public interest in registering at SMK Arina Sidikalang has increased every year, this can be possible public trust in this school is increasing. The addition of the number of students indicates that Public Relations work hard in building the image of the school. For this reason, the role of public relations is considered important enough to be used as a medium in building a positive image in SMK Arina Sidikalang, besides that the role of public relations is also a medium for school socialization to the community and is expected to provide support for various activities carried out by the school.

While in general, the number of vocational students in each school in the 2018/2019 school year, SMK Arina Sidikalang is in the 4th (fourth) position in Dairi Regency.

Table 2. Data of Vocational High School in Dairi regency Academic Year 2018/2019

No	Schools Name	Students Total
1	SMK Neg 1 Sidikalang	1218
2	SMK S HKBP Sidikalang	1143
3	SMK S. Rismaduma Sumbul	903
4	SMK Swasta Arina Sidikalang	638
5	SMK N 1 Parbuluan	405
6	SMK N 1 Sitinjo	362
	SMK S Marantha	340
7	SMK N 1 Tanah Pinem	336
8	SMK S Prima	277
9	SMK S Anugrah	273
10	SMK Teknik Dairi	247
11	SMK S. Bukit Cahaya 2	228
12	SMK S. Bukit Cahaya 1	168
13	SMK S. Nasional	112
14	SMK S Advent Sumbul	17

Source. <http://dapo.dikdasmen.kemdikbud.go.id>

Seeing the success of the public relations department at the school, I want to examine how the public relations management strategy used in SMK Arina Sidikalang is so that the public interest increases and is interested in entrusting their children to SMK Arina even though there is a problem facing this school namely the number of schools a kind that is a competitor in gaining public trust in Dairi Regency.

## 2. Literature Review

Strategy is large-scale planning that is oriented to the reach of the distant future and is set in such a way that allows the organization to interact effectively and efficiently with its environment with competitive conditions directed at optimizing the achievement of goals and various means of the organization. (Salusu, 1996). So that there are basic elements that form management activities, namely: men, materials, machinery, methods, money and markets. The six elements have their respective functions and influence each other in achieving organizational goals effectively and efficiently.

Management Functions intended are the processes carried out in carrying out the main activities displayed by a leader. Management is defined as the process of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling (Siagian, 2006: 73)

## **2.1. Public Relations Management Strategy**

### **a. Understanding of PR**

Public Relations is an activity that aims to gain goodwill, trust, mutual understanding, and a good image of the public / community and has a goal to create a favorable public opinion and benefit all parties (Rachmadi, 1996: 16). Duty of Public Relations (PR). According to Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 24 of 2008 concerning the Standards of School / School Administration, Daily Tasks for the Implementation of School and Community Relations Administration are:

- Regulate school relationships with parents.
- Maintaining good relations and facilitating the smooth running of activities with the school committee.
- Helps plan stakeholder involvement programs.
- Fostering cooperation with government and community institutions.
- Promote school / madsarah.
- Coordinating the search for graduates (alumni).
- Serving school / school guests.
- Creating a service system for information and reporting on school relations with the community.
- Use ICT to administer school relations with the community.
- Giving understanding to the community about the functioning of the school through various communication techniques (magazines, newspapers and bringing in resources)

Thus, it can be interpreted that the task of public relations is to introduce the organization to the community so that the public is aware of activities that exist in the organization that aim to change the image of the organization in the eyes of the public or the public.

### **b. Functions and Objectives of Public Relations**

According to F. Rachmadi (1992: 21) public relations function is "grow and develop good relations between institutions/organizations with the public, internal and external in order to instill understanding, foster motivation and public participation in an effort to create a climate of opinion (public opinion) that benefits the organization . In carrying out its

functions, PR has the principle that the public relations program is based on cooperation or Team work is not only unilateral, public relations also has the principle of integration, continuity, simplicity, suitability and flexibility.

According to Dozier and Broom (2008: 20-21) the role of public relations or public relations in an organization can be divided into categories namely:

- Expert advisors (Expert prescriber), an experienced and highly skilled practitioner of public relations experts can help find solutions in solving public relations problems.
- Facilitator of communication, in this case the public relations practitioner acts as a communicator or mediator to help management in terms of hearing what the public wants and wants.
- Facilitator of the problem solving process (Problem solving process facilitator), the role of public relations practitioners in the process of solving public relations problems is part of the management team.
- Communication technicians, differ from the three roles of the previous professional PR practitioner who are closely related to the functions and roles of organizational management

#### c. Stages and objectives of public relations

In detail, the stages in the public relations process according to Lesly are as follows:

- Analyzing the general climate of the organization's attitudes and relations with its environment.
- Determine the attitude of each group towards the organization.
- Analyzing the conditions of opinion.
- Anticipating potential problems, needs, or opportunities.
- Formulating policies
- Plan the means to improve the attitude of one group
- Carry out planned activities
- Feedback, evaluation and adjustments

### **3. Methodology**

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, it was based on the intention to describe the behavior of informants namely public relations, principals, and school committees according to the existing social situation. In this context the researcher tried to understand the public relations management strategy in building the public interest in SMK Arina Private Sidikalang. The subject of this study was

directed at finding data from public relations, school principals, and school committees.

The use of the three data collection techniques above is supported by using tools such as audio records and photo cameras. However, there is no specific use, one and the other complement each other.

In this research, the analysis of the Milles and Huberman models consists of: (a) data reduction, (b) data presentation, (c) conclusions. To strengthen the validity of the findings and authenticity of the research data, the researcher refers to the use of standards for the validity of the suggested data consisting of: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability

#### **4. Results And Discussion**

##### **4.1. The strategy applied by public relations managers in building the image of SMK Arina Sidikalang**

In an effort to build a school image that aims to increase public interest, it cannot be borne by either party at the school institution, but the implementation needs cooperation of all school members. The strategies used at Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School are:

- **Understanding the internal and external conditions of the school**  
By understanding the internal and external conditions of the school it will be easier to know the strengths and weaknesses of the school itself
- **Improving the physical and non-physical conditions of the school**  
Efforts to improve schools are to build a school image, one of which is by activities that can be directly felt by the community such as the celebration of religious holidays or activities that are indirectly felt by the community to make the image of the school good, namely by improving student achievement. academically and non-academically.
- **Introduction to schools to the community and establish cooperation with other agencies**  
The introduction of schools to the community and establishing cooperation with other agencies always increases the ability to be able to meet the educational needs of the community. This activity is carried out by collaborating in the field of student work practices, and collaborating with certain agencies in implementing educational activities in schools and around schools.

#### **4.2. Supporting factors and obstacles to the deputy headmaster of the public relations field in building the image of Arina Private Vocational School Sidikalang**

Some of the supporting factors possessed by Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School in creating public interest, namely:

- A conscious attitude from each member of the school to make Arina Private Vocational Schools a school known to the public. Collaboration of all school members to maintain the good name of the school.
- Support from alumni who work together as volunteer journalists in disseminating information through online media.
- Concern for foundations to develop schools in terms of physical and non-physical aspects.
- Grants for government and private schools

Some of the inhibiting factors the school has in creating public interest are:

- Dual Assignment as Deputy Principal in the field of Public Relations and as a teacher
- Limited facilities and infrastructure in the field of public relations.

#### **4.3. The results achieved by the Deputy Head of Public Relations in Building the Image of SMK Arina Sidikalang**

Furthermore, the imaging efforts that have been carried out by PR have slowly shown the results among them:

- Realizing quality schools that can meet the educational needs of the surrounding community.
- Improve the quality of public education
- A multicultural society culture; religion, language, ethnicity, race are the main drivers for Arina Private Vocational Schools to be the center of learning activities
- Increase trust in the existence of the school

#### **4.4. The strategies used by Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School are:**

- Understand the internal and external conditions of the school.  
By understanding the internal and external conditions of the school it will be easier to know the strengths and weaknesses of the school itself. Then Sondang P. Siagian in the Strategy Management book revealed that what is meant by the strength possessed by an institution is, among other things, the specific competencies contained within the institution which result in the excellence of the institution. It is said



that because schools have a source of skills, excellence over other madrasah so that they create a positive image of the school.

- **Improve physical and non-physical conditions of the school**  
After understanding the state of the school, the next step is to improve the physical and non-physical conditions in the school so that the community can accept the existence of the school and get a positive image from the community. The physical neglect is an improvement that can be seen directly by the community such as the improvement of the sports field, changes in the school order and the availability of suggestion boxes provided in the school.
- **Introduction of schools to the community and cooperation with other agencies**  
Schools as formal educational institutions with multi-cultural nuances function to prepare competent and noble human resources. To support the imaging of this school, the role of all school members is needed to introduce it to the community.

## **5. Conclusions And Recommendations**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

From the discussion of this study in accordance with what was formulated in the problems based on observations, interviews, in the field and specific findings of the study revealed that:

Public Relations Management Strategy in building the image of SMK Arina Sidikalang In an effort to build a school image, the steps taken by the Vice Headmaster of Public Relations are as follows:

- Understanding the internal and external conditions of the school by identifying the weaknesses and strengths of the school, the public relations manager can make decisions on what steps will be taken to improve the school.
- Improve physical and non-physical conditions of the school. The physical neglect is the improvement of sports fields, changes in school order, and the availability of suggestion boxes provided in the school. While the non-physical improvement is to invite the public to celebrate Islamic holidays and improve student achievement both academically and non-academically.

- Introducing schools to the community and cooperating with other institutions including by making efforts to understand schools that schools are now no longer just a place to study science but all the sciences of general and religious sciences, and now schools have better competencies and always improve ability to be able to meet the educational needs of the community.

Supporting factors and obstacles to public relations managers in building the image of Arina Private Vocational School Sidikalang.

Factors supporting public relations managers in building school cintra are:

- Cooperation with alumni who work as journalists so they can help publish academic and non-academic achievements achieved by students / activities and activities organized by the Arina Vocational School Sidikalang
- Concern for the government, foundations and all school members to support the Deputy Principal Program for Public Relations to build a school image

The obtacle factors for the deputy headmaster of public relations in building school images include:

- Double duty as a teacher and deputy head of the public relations field
- Limited facilities and infrastructure in the field of public relations.

The results achieved by the Public Relations Manager in building the image of Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School

- Realizing quality schools that can meet the educational needs of the surrounding community.
- Increased quality of community education.
- The multicultural school climate is the main driver for Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School as the center of learning and achievement activities.
- Increase trust in the existence of the school

## 5.2. Suggestion

From the results of this study, the authors want to give advice to improve public relations management strategies in building the image of Arina Sidikalang Private Vocational School, namely:

- For principals as leaders can take the results of this study as a material consideration for taking policy in order to improve the quality of the image of a better school.
- For Deputy Principals in the public relations sector to be able to work with relevant agencies to be able to improve the image of the school even better. And carry out the main tasks and functions of the public relations sector in accordance with the policies that have been set.
- Parents and school committees are also expected to show high participation through increasing harmonious cooperation that synergizes with the school to improve the image of the school in the future by helping schools find funding for the provision of public relations facilities and infrastructure

## REFERENCES

Rosady Ruslan, (2008). *Manajemen Public Relations dan Media Komunikasi*, Jakarta: Rajawali Press

Rachmadi, (1992). *Public Relations Dalam Teori Dan Praktek*, Jakarta: Gramedia

Wahjosumidjo, (2003). *Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah*, Jakarta: PT RajaGrafindo Persada

Michele E. Ewing, at all. (2019). *Developing a New Generation of Public Relations Leaders: Best Practices of Public Relations Undergraduate Programs*. *Journal of Public Relations Education* 2019, Vol. 5, No. 1, 31-69

[http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/news/read/2017/07/11/309468/guru\\_smk\\_wakil\\_dairi\\_untuk\\_seleksi\\_guru/](http://www.medanbisnisdaily.com/news/read/2017/07/11/309468/guru_smk_wakil_dairi_untuk_seleksi_guru/)

<http://dapo.dikdasmen.kemdikbud.go.id>

Salusu, J, (1996). *Pengambilan Keputusan Untuk Organisasi Profit dan Nonprofit*, Jakarta: Grafindo Persada

Sondang P. Siagian. (2006). *Sistem Informasi Manajemen*, Bumi Aksara. Jakarta.

Rachmadi, (1996), Public Relations, Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama

Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 24 of 2008 concerning the Standards of School / School Administration, Daily Tasks for the Implementation of School and Community Relations Administration

Broom, Glenn. M., Dozier, David. M. (2008). Using Research in Public Relations: Application to Program Management. New Jersey: Prentice Hall

▪ .