

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT OF SMAK ST. THOMAS AQUINAS WEETEBULA (SUMBA) TO IMPROVE SCHOOL PROMOTION

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to find out the role and strategy of public relations management in promoting or publishing SMAK St. Thomas Aquinas. As well as how to find innovations in promotion at st. Thomas Aquinas High School education institutions. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. Data collection techniques consist of: interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis techniques use Miles and Huberman model field analysis, which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion and verification. The results obtained in this study are that the school has no desire to change and improve the quality and quantity. All school residents are comfortable with what is now, so no one is thinking of making innovations ranging from curriculum to small things like school promotion. There is no program of vice principals that can be run to build the school. Incompetent human resources make school development hampered. This needs to get special attention from the foundation as the owner of the school to conduct an evaluation on the school.

Keywords: *public relations, management, school promotion, innovation*

INTRODUCTION

The development of the quality of school education requires good school management in order for the education to develop (Raharjo & Yuliana, 2016). Good management can produce productive and qualified graduates (Ringgawati, 2016). Without education management, educational objectives cannot be realized optimally, effectively and efficiently. Therefore, management is very necessary to improve the performance of schools and the implementation of educational processes in schools in a productive, effective and efficient manner.

In fact, every educational institution is inseparable from good education management, as well as St. Thomas Aquinas High School. Sma St. Thomas Aquinas is a Catholic educational institution from Mardi Wiyata Foundation located in Southwest Sumba Regency. This Catholic educational institution was in the movement by the Monks of The Brother of Mother of The Sacred Heart (BHK) based in malang city of East Java. St. Thomas Aquinas High School realizes that the management of education is the most important component that is inseparable from the development of an educational institution process as a whole. Therefore, this school is one of the favorite schools on Sumba Island specifically in Southwest Sumba Regency which can be seen from the achievements printed since the school was founded.

Every principal who has ever led a high school in St. Thomas Aquinas has its own management to design the promotion process to the community. However, as the headmaster changed, it made the school management not even better, but became increasingly degenerate, resulting in fewer students attending St. Thomas Aquinas High School. This makes public confidence in the quality of schools decrease. The community has always compared the quality of schools from its

establishment until now and experienced degradation of quality and learners. Schools that had big names and became booming are now being left behind by the community slowly.

To overcome the above statement, the publication or promotion of the school must take priority. Publication or promotion is one of the tasks of public relations. Simply put, public relations is likened to the delivery of all information. According to Fund and Wagnel, the understanding of public relations is all activities and techniques used by organizations or individuals to create or maintain a good attitude and response from outside parties to their existence and activities (Anggoro, 2000).

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to find out the role and strategy of public relations management in promoting SMAK St. Thomas Aquinas. As well as how to find innovations in promotion at St. Thomas Aquinas High School education institutions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at SMAK ST. Thomas Aquinas Weetebula (Sumba) using descriptive qualitative method. Data analysis techniques use Miles and Huberman model field analysis, which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion and verification. The data collection method used in this research is observation, interview and documentation method. The observation method was carried out by conducting direct observations to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School in Southwest Sumba Regency, Sumba, NTT related to school promotion. The interview method is conducted by interviewing teachers directly related to public relations and part of the school promotion committee. Researchers unearthed information related to the facts of the field that occurred today where it is more focused on public relations in conducting the promotion of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School. Documentation method is used to keep the data obtained guaranteed validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research that has been done obtained results and discussion as follows:

1. Public Relations Management

Public relations is a two-way communication between organizations and the public reciprocally in order to support the functions and objectives of management by establishing cooperation in the fulfillment of common interests (Effendy, 2002). Public Relations at St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School became a liaison between the school committee and the school. But this is not clearly seen in how it works. Teachers entrusted as part of public relations do not create programs and there is no innovation in building schools. The members of the school committee never attended and attended the events held by the school. There was no coordination meeting between public relations as a school representative and part of the committee in planning innovations or breakthroughs made to improve students' animo to St. Thomas Aquinas High School. Thus, there is no cooperation in the role of planning and implementation of public relations programs between the public relations department and the school committees. This is not in accordance with the main functions of public relations management which include the function of planning, namely setting what to achieve, how to achieve, how long, how many people are needed, and how much it costs (Nasution, 2010).

Suryosubroto (2012) stated that public relations carry out activities that have been prepared or planned in advance and efforts can be carried out effectively and efficiently. In implementing public relations programs, there needs to be participation, inspiration and aspirations from people who care about education (Nisa & Denas, 2019). People's aspirations usually come from alumni, where each alumni has their own impression when they get an education. Alumni will always compare the educational development of the school from year to year. There are good developments and some are lacking, so it requires attention from the school to improve and update themselves through school self-evaluation.

Public relations as an extension of the school is able to accommodate the aspirations of the community and convey to the school to align with the interests of the school in order to achieve the common goal (Nasution, 2010). But the aspirations of this community are often heard and seen but public relations and the school are more silent and do not care about those aspirations. Public relations is more comfortable with the situation so that there is no change even though the school is getting worse. This is not in accordance with the role of public relations according to Edward, namely 1) Providing information to the community, 2) Doing persuasively to change and attitudes of the community directly, 3) Trying to integrate public attitudes and actions to be in harmony with an agency (Ruslan, 2006).

For the last five years public relations has had no program for school development. Public relations programs from year to year there are no changes or updates. A program with careful planning is a condition that must be met in order for an activity to be carried out properly and achieve its objectives (Mulyadi, 2018). The inability of public relations to make policy proposals and school education programs is reflected in the lack of school promotion activities. School education activities run by students for five years are the same, such as; spiritual coaching together/ retreat. This makes the learners bored because of the absence of other activities as a character insight enhancer.

Public relations has a role to play in maintaining its existence. Institutions can walk on the spot or die if the public relations does not run as it should (Rahmat, 2016). Public Relations SMAK St. Thomas Aquinas is able to accommodate complaints and complaints against school policies and programs. This complaint has been made by the public either formally through a meeting of parents at the time of receipt of reports of students' learning outcomes at the end of the semester or informally. After the complaint or complaint was received there was no follow-up of the complaint from the school. As a result, a growing number of students each year choose St. Thomas Aquinas High School to attend further education. This is realized by all stakeholders but left behind.

2. School Promotion

School promotion or promotion of educational services is a marketing tool of educational services that can serve to market the world of education (Gandhi, 2004). School promotion strategies are also important for school promotion. Alma (2005) stated that the purpose of the promotion is to inform about the existence of new products, persuading to make the product as the consumer's choice. Each school has its own promotional strategy. One of them is promoting by relying on activities organized by the provincial education office or district

education office. Such as participating in science Olympic competitions between schools in districts and provinces. In addition, it can also be through competitions organized by the district tourism office, such as; pop singer, vocal group and regional dance.

At SMAK St. Thomas Aquinas rely only on outside activities as a promotional event. While internally the school does not have a breakthrough to do the promotion of the school. The promotion carried out by the previous headmaster was implemented by following the development of technology. The promotion was the idea of some teachers to hold internal activities as a form of promotion. But this is sometimes not in line with other teachers who have conservative thoughts. Thus causing conflict between teachers in terms of promotion.

Teachers who have a leadership spirit and a changing spirit make a new breakthrough to promote the school by introducing or promoting the school through technology that is in accordance with the times. Promotional activities carried out include school bazaars, interfaith activities, holding internal competitions and other extra-curricular activities. These activities are then promoted through social media such as facebook, instagram, whatsapp and other social media. This promotion is also on the initiative of economics and cultural arts teachers not part of public relations. This can give the impression that the lack of care and attitude has from stakeholders in developing the school of SMAK St. Thomas Aquinas. This school is running as it is and does not contribute well to the community and the citizens of the school, thus giving the impression that education at St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School is degraded both in quantity and quality.

3. Innovations Offered

After the researchers conducted an internship within a month, through observation and interviews, the innovation that can be given in the school promsosi is by providing insight to all school residents in conducting school promotion. Researchers have seen and heard over the last five years about the promotions being run and the media used in doing those promotions. So the researchers gave breakthroughs in other forms to promote the school.

The contribution made by researchers to the school is by visually promoting; researchers gave souvenirs in the form of carry-on bags bearing the identity of St. Thomas Aquinas High School. This bag is distributed to all school residents ranging from principals, teachers, employees, students, alumni and the community that can be reached. With the hope that with this shared bag, the public will indirectly get to know St. Thomas Aquinas High School. This is a form of visual promotion.

Other contributions the researchers made to the school were; researchers take videos and pictures to do school promotional video designs. This video is about the introduction of the school environment and the process of teaching and learning activities in the school. The process of taking the video directly and the absence of settings from researchers. This is done to obtain naturalization or authenticity of ongoing processes and activities. The purpose of the school's promotional video maker is to assist the school in conducting promotions through social media. So that it can penetrate to all levels of society, especially junior high school students (SMP). Because people are now more inclined to social media so that promotions can keep up with these developments.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The school has no desire to change and improve quality and quantity. All school residents are comfortable with what is now, so no one is thinking of making innovations ranging from curriculum to small things like school promotion. There is no program of vice principals that can be run to build the school. Incompetent human resources make school development hampered. This needs to get special attention from the foundation as the owner of the school to conduct an evaluation on the school. The promotion of schools carried out by the school has not met the needs of the community. The community is still lacking information about St. Thomas Aquinas Elementary School, so the community does not have the full confidence to send their children to the school.

The recommendation suggested by the author is that the school plans an internal activity program (competition) periodically involving students at both elementary and junior high school level as a process of introduction or promotion of the school. In addition, it enhances cooperation between the school and parents and school committees to improve school promotion. Souvenir bags and school promotion videos that have been made by researchers can be a reference or a small example in making the next school promotions.

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