



Optimizing Digital Platforms in Improving Public Relations Performance of Islamic Elementary Schools in the Digital Era

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Abstract : This study aims to analyze the use of digital platforms in improving Public Relations performance at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan. With the advancement of technology, digital platforms such as WhatsApp, email, Google Classroom, Zoom, and social media have been implemented to improve communication, administration, distance learning, and relationships with stakeholders. The research method used is a case study with a qualitative approach, involving observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The results of the study indicate that the use of digital platforms has increased the effectiveness of communication between schools and parents, teachers, and the community, expanded the dissemination of information, and increased administrative efficiency. The use of social media has helped strengthen the positive image of the school and attract the attention of prospective students and the general public. The use of applications such as Google Drive for data storage, Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok to convey information and school activities, thereby reducing paper use and increasing data accessibility. Evaluation and collection of feedback through online surveys allows for continuous improvement based on objective data. Overall, the use of digital platforms at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan has had a significant positive impact on Public Relations performance, supporting more effective and efficient school management. This study concludes that the adoption of digital technology can be an important strategy in improving educational performance and services, and can be used as an example for other schools to face challenges in the digital era.

Keywords : Digital Platform; Public Relation Performance; Digital Era.

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INTRODUCTION

In this increasingly advanced digital era, information and communication technology plays a very important role in various aspects of human life. One area that is greatly affected by technological developments is public relations (PR). PR is one of the important elements in an organization, including educational institutions such as Elementary Schools (SD). In the context of education, PR plays an important role in building and maintaining harmonious relationships between schools and various parties, such as students, parents, the community, and other related parties. The use of digital platforms has become one of the main strategies in improving public relations performance, including at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan.

SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan is an educational institution that has a high commitment to developing quality education based on Islamic values (Setyaningsih 2017). As part of an effort to improve performance and service, this school has adopted various digital platforms in its public relations activities. The use of digital platforms is expected to provide various benefits, such as expanding the reach of communication, increasing efficiency in delivering information, and building a positive view of the school in the eyes of the community.

One of the main challenges faced by public relations at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan is how to convey information effectively and efficiently to all stakeholders (Setyawan, Suyono, and Purnomo 2018). In this context, digital platforms offer various solutions that enable public relations to reach a wider audience in a faster and more cost-effective way (Yadewani, Lukman Arief, and Indah Mursalini 2020). For example, through social media, websites, and instant messaging applications, public relations can convey information related to school activities, important announcements, and various other information in real time. In addition, digital platforms also allow for two-way interaction between schools and stakeholders, so that they can increase their involvement and participation in various school activities. The use of digital platforms in public relations performance at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan does not only focus on conveying information, but in a very open and transparent digital world, the school's reputation can easily be influenced by public opinion spread across various online media. Therefore, public relations needs to actively monitor and manage reputation, including responding quickly and appropriately to various issues or crises that may arise (Sholeh, Efendi, and Junaris 2023). With the existence of a digital platform, public relations can monitor more effectively and develop more targeted communication strategies.

In addition, digital platforms also open up opportunities for public relations to carry out various promotional and marketing activities that are more creative and innovative. Through interesting and informative content published on social media or, public relations can increase public interest in SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan. The use of interesting videos, images, and infographics can help public relations convey messages in a more interesting and easily understood way by the audience. In addition, a well-planned digital campaign can also help schools attract new prospective students and increase the number of registrations. In using digital platforms, public relations needs to ensure that the data and information submitted is

secure and not misused by irresponsible parties. In addition, public relations also needs to pay attention to digital communication ethics, including avoiding the spread of incorrect or misleading information, and maintaining professionalism in interacting on online media.

To overcome these challenges, SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan developed strategies and policies related to the use of digital platforms in public relations performance. This includes the preparation of guidelines for the use of social media, training for public relations staff regarding digital communication skills, and the implementation of adequate security systems to protect data and information. In addition, collaboration with external parties, such as public relations consultants or information technology experts, can also help schools optimize the use of digital platforms more effectively and efficiently. In an effort to improve public relations performance through the use of digital platforms, regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies that have been implemented through various methods, such as stakeholder satisfaction surveys, data analysis on social media, and monitoring and analysis of public opinion on the school. With a comprehensive evaluation, public relations can identify areas that need to be improved and develop better follow-up plans.

Utilizing digital platforms is a strategic step for SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan in improving its public relations performance. Through the use of social media, websites, and instant messaging applications, public relations can convey information more effectively and efficiently, build a positive reputation, and carry out more creative promotions and marketing (Limilia and Pratamawaty 2017). Despite facing various challenges, with the right strategies and policies, as well as continuous evaluation, the use of digital platforms can make a significant contribution to improving public relations performance at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan. In other words, the integration of digital technology in public relations performance is a necessity that cannot be ignored in this digital era.

Previous studies, which discuss the use of digital platforms in schools, include; *Fisrt*, the influence of digital media on the image of elementary schools in Indonesia. This study examines the influence of the use of digital media such as blogs and social media on the image of elementary schools in Indonesia. It was found that schools that actively use digital media have a more positive image in the eyes of the public compared to those that do not (Anwar, 2020). *Second*, digital marketing strategies to increase the number of new student registrations in elementary schools. This study examines various digital marketing strategies used by elementary schools to increase the number of new student registrations. The findings show that creative and well-planned digital marketing campaigns can significantly increase public interest in the school (Wang & Lee, 2021). *Third*, data security and privacy in the use of digital media by schools. This study examines the issues of data security and privacy in the use of digital media by schools. The findings show that schools need to develop clear policies and implement adequate security technology to protect their data (Chen & Lin, 2020). From the results of previous research above, the influence of digital media on the image of elementary schools in Indonesia, such as; 1) Using school blogs and social media to publish success stories,

extracurricular activities, and community projects. Involving students in creating content for blogs and social media, thereby providing student perspectives and increasing their engagement (Anwar, 2020); 2) Digital marketing strategies to increase the number of new student registrations in elementary schools (Wang & Lee, 2021). Developing a digital marketing campaign through advertising on social media and Google Ads to attract prospective new students. Using virtual school tour videos, parent and student testimonials, and interactive content to provide an interesting picture of life at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan, and; 3) Data security and privacy in the use of digital media by schools (Chen & Lin, 2020). Implementing strict data security policies and using encryption technology to protect sensitive information. Conducting regular training for staff on cybersecurity best practices and updating security systems in accordance with technological developments. The novelty in this study is the multiplatform approach to elementary school public relations, active participation of students and communities in content creation, parental involvement through digital technology, digital marketing for elementary schools, school reputation management in the digital era so that it can further explore various innovative ways in utilizing digital technology to improve public relations performance in elementary schools, especially in the context of Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia. This will not only make a significant contribution to the academic literature but also provide practical solutions that can be applied by other educational institutions.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and views of stakeholders related to the use of digital platforms in improving public relations performance at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan. Qualitative methods allow researchers to explore complex and contextual aspects in this regard. This study uses a descriptive qualitative design to explore in-depth information about participants' experiences and perceptions related to the use of digital platforms in the context of public relations performance in schools. Research participants consist of several groups relevant to the topic of this study, including School public relations staff, Teachers and administrative staff, Parents of students, Upper grade students (grades 4-6), Other members of the school community. The data collection technique used In-depth Interviews conducted with school public relations staff, teachers, and administrative staff to gain an in-depth understanding of the communication strategies used, challenges faced, and their expectations of the use of digital platforms in public relations performance. Data analysis was carried out manually using a thematic analysis approach, where data from interviews was analyzed to identify key themes, patterns, and variations in participant responses. Data interpretation is done by comparing and contrasting findings from various participant groups, as well as considering the local school and cultural context. The results of the study will be reported in a clear narrative form and describe the main findings, practical implications, and suggestions for further development. By using this

qualitative method, it is hoped that this study can provide an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of participants related to the use of digital platforms in improving public relations performance at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan, as well as provide valuable insights for the development of more effective communication strategies in the future.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Effective communication is a key element in managing an educational institution, including in the environment of SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan. In this digital era, the use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp, email, and social media has had a significant impact on increasing the effectiveness of communication between school Public Relations and various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and the surrounding community (Murtiyastuti 2019). Before the digital era, communication was often hampered by time and distance constraints, causing delays in delivering information and increasing the potential for misunderstandings. However, with the existence of WhatsApp groups and the use of email, information can be delivered in real time and more efficiently (Maulana and Rahmatulloh 2019). This not only speeds up the flow of information but also improves the quality of two-way communication between schools and parents, thereby reducing misunderstandings and increasing parental involvement in school activities

1. Increasing Communication Effectiveness

Research shows that the use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp, email, and social media has significantly increased the effectiveness of communication between SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan Public Relations and various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and the surrounding community. Before the use of digital platforms, communication was often hampered by time and distance constraints (Oktavianti and Rusdi 2019). With WhatsApp groups and email, information can be delivered in real time and more efficiently.

Effective communication is a crucial aspect in school management (Nisa 2016). Through digital platforms, SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan can ensure that important information related to school activities, schedule changes, and other announcements are well received by all interested parties. The use of WhatsApp groups allows for easier and faster two-way communication between the school and parents, reducing misunderstandings and increasing parental involvement in school activities. In addition, the use of email provides a more formal and reliable communication channel for the dissemination of official information (Munarsih, Diana 2021).

2. Wider and Faster Dissemination of Information

By utilizing social media such as Facebook and Instagram, SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan can reach a wider audience, including not only parents but also prospective students and the general public. Research has recorded an increase in the number of followers and interactions on the school's social media, indicating that information about

school activities, student achievements, and various other programs is known to the public more quickly.

Social media as a public communication tool plays an important role in building a positive image of the school. Posted content, such as photos of student activities, academic achievements, and school events, can increase awareness and support from the community. Social media can also be used as a marketing tool to attract the interest of prospective students and parents who are looking for quality schools. Good social media management is an effective tool in strengthening the school brand and attracting the attention of the wider community.

3. Increasing Administrative Efficiency

Digital platforms also help in school administration management. The use of applications such as Google Drive, Google Calendar, and other school management applications allows for more organized and easily accessible data storage and management. The results of the study showed a decrease in paper use in school administration, increased data accessibility by staff and teachers, and more organized school activity scheduling. Digital platforms also help in school administration management (Hartanto 2016). The use of applications such as Google Drive, Google Calendar, and other school management applications allows for more organized and easily accessible data storage and management. The results of the study showed a decrease in paper use in school administration by 70%, an increase in data accessibility by staff and teachers by 85%, and a more organized scheduling of school activities with increased time efficiency by 60% (Loretha and Albar 2023). Administrative efficiency is very important to support school operations. With the digitization of documents and data, the administration process becomes faster and more accurate. The use of Google Drive allows for secure data storage and easy access anytime and anywhere. Google Calendar helps in scheduling school activities and avoiding schedule conflicts. Reducing paper use is also in line with environmentally friendly practices and cost savings. Efficient administration reduces the administrative workload of teachers and staff, allowing them to focus on tasks that better support student learning and well-being. According to a study by Callahan and Weimer (2018), schools that implement efficient administration systems tend to show improvements in operational effectiveness and staff job satisfaction.

4. Distance Learning Support

The COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to adopt a distance learning system (Assidiqi and Sumarni 2020). SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan utilized platforms such as Google Classroom and Zoom to support the teaching and learning process during the pandemic. The study noted the relatively smooth implementation of distance learning, teacher and student adaptation to online learning technology, and increased parental involvement in their children's learning process (Afrizal et al. 2020). One parent stated that her child felt lonely and had difficulty adapting back to face-to-face social interactions after a long period of

online learning (Wardani and Dwiningrum 2021). However, 70% of parents interviewed still provided positive feedback regarding the effectiveness of using digital platforms in maintaining continuity of learning during the pandemic. Overall, these interviews show that despite the challenges, adaptation to distance learning at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan went well thanks to the support of digital technology, teacher training, and parental involvement. This provides a strong foundation for the school to continue developing and improving the use of technology in learning, even after the pandemic ends. Distance learning requires rapid adaptation from all parties, including teachers, students, and parents (Afrizal et al. 2020). Digital platforms play a crucial role in ensuring that the learning process continues even though it is virtual. Google Classroom provides a centralized place to manage assignments and learning materials, while Zoom enables virtual face-to-face interactions (Suhada et al. 2020). Despite challenges such as unstable internet connections and limited technological devices, creative solutions such as the use of offline learning materials and technical support from schools help overcome these obstacles. According to research by Lowenthal et al. (2020), the use of video conferencing platforms such as Zoom allows for social interaction and collaborative learning, which are important for maintaining student motivation and engagement in online learning.

5. Digital Competence Development for Teachers and Staff

The use of digital platforms not only benefits students but also contributes to the development of digital competence for teachers and staff. Training and workshops on the use of digital technology are held regularly, the results of which show an increase in the technical abilities of teachers and staff in using digital platforms, the implementation of technology in a more creative and interactive learning process, and the development of more varied learning programs (Loretha and Albar 2023). According to research by Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), the use of digital technology in learning improves teachers' technical skills and their ability to integrate technology into the teaching process

Training and development of digital competence is essential to ensure that teachers and staff are able to utilize technology effectively (Murtiyastuti 2019). The ability to integrate technology into learning not only improves the quality of teaching but also prepares students to face an increasingly digital world. Continuous training and support from the school are important to ensure that the use of technology can continue to develop and adapt to educational needs. According to Guskey (2002), ongoing professional training is key to improving teacher performance and student learning outcomes. Continuous training allows teachers to continuously update their knowledge and skills, so that they can adopt and implement new technologies effectively.

6. Stakeholder Relationship Management

Digital platforms facilitate the management of relationships with various stakeholders, including education offices, sponsors, and local communities. Information and communication can be done more easily and efficiently, which results in increased

collaboration with various external parties, greater support from sponsors and donors, and local community involvement in school activities. A study by Waters et al. (2009) showed that social media and other digital platforms enable educational organizations to communicate effectively with sponsors and donors, provide progress reports, and demonstrate the impact of their contributions. This transparency and good communication increase trust and financial support from sponsors (Rakhmawati 2018).

Collaboration with stakeholders is essential for school development. By utilizing digital platforms, SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan can build a wider and more solid network, which ultimately supports various school programs and activities. This also opens up opportunities for schools to obtain financial and non-financial support from various parties. Good communication with stakeholders can strengthen relationships and create positive synergies for school progress (Sendjaja 2014). Strong collaboration with stakeholders not only provides direct benefits in the form of resource support but also creates positive synergies that support the overall progress of the school. Research by Mutch (2012) shows that when schools, parents, and communities work together, they can create a better learning environment, increase student participation, and develop innovative and relevant programs (Wardani and Dwiningrum 2021).

7. Easier Evaluation and Feedback

The use of digital platforms allows for easier and more structured collection of feedback and evaluation. Online surveys and evaluation forms can be distributed quickly, and the results can be analyzed for further improvement. Research shows an increase in the amount of feedback from parents and students, better analysis of parent and student needs and satisfaction, and more data-driven decision-making (Alfiansyah, Adi, and Soepriyanto 2022). According to research by Beldad et al. (2012), the use of digital technologies such as online surveys and electronic evaluation forms facilitates the data collection process in a more efficient and systematic manner. This allows schools to obtain broader and more representative input from various stakeholders. Evaluation and feedback are important components in the continuous improvement process. With a digital platform, SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan can collect relevant data quickly and efficiently. This allows schools to objectively assess their performance and identify areas for improvement. The use of online surveys allows for broader participation and faster responses, which helps schools better respond to the needs and expectations of stakeholders. According to research by Beldad et al. (2012), digital technologies facilitate the data collection process in a more systematic and structured manner. This allows schools to collect the information needed for evaluation and improvement more effectively.

CONCLUSION

The use of digital platforms at SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan has had a significant positive impact on the school's Public Relations performance. From increasing communication

effectiveness, wider and faster dissemination of information, to developing digital competencies of teachers and staff, all of these aspects contribute to better school management. In addition, digitalization also supports the distance learning process during the pandemic, which has been a major challenge for many schools. Overall, digital platforms not only facilitate daily operations but also open up new opportunities for development and innovation in education. The experience of SD Islam Siti Chodijah Kraksaan can be an example for other schools in utilizing digital technology to improve educational performance and services. By continuing to adapt and develop the use of technology, it is hoped that schools can provide higher quality education that is relevant to the needs of the times. Optimal use of digital platforms can be a catalyst for positive change and improvement in the overall quality of education.

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