

INTEGRATED PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT IN BUILDING ISLAMIC SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

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ABSTRACT - This study is motivated by the increasing demands on Islamic schools to develop sustainable strategic communication with stakeholders. It aims to analyze the implementation of integrated public relations management in building relationships between Islamic schools and stakeholders. The study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques. The results indicate that integrated public relations management enhances public trust, institutional reputation, and stakeholder participation through systematic communication strategies, information transparency, and the integration of Islamic values. In conclusion, a strategic and participatory public relations approach is key to creating collaborative and sustainable relationships. Future research is recommended to apply quantitative or mixed-method approaches and to develop digital-based public relations models.

ABSTRAK - Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh meningkatnya tuntutan terhadap sekolah Islam untuk membangun komunikasi strategis yang berkelanjutan dengan stakeholder. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi manajemen public relations terintegrasi dalam membangun hubungan antara sekolah Islam dan stakeholder. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan studi dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan teknik analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa manajemen public relations terintegrasi mampu meningkatkan kepercayaan publik, reputasi institusi, serta partisipasi stakeholder melalui strategi komunikasi yang sistematis, transparansi informasi, dan integrasi nilai-nilai Islam. Kesimpulannya, pendekatan public relations yang strategis dan partisipatif menjadi kunci dalam menciptakan hubungan yang kolaboratif dan berkelanjutan. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif atau mixed-method serta mengembangkan model public relations berbasis digital.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of education in the era of globalization is marked by increasingly intense competition among educational institutions in building reputation and public trust. Schools are no longer perceived solely as institutions that facilitate learning processes, but also as organizations required to professionally manage their image and social relations (Elmore, 1995). In this context, a fundamental research problem emerges, namely the challenge faced by educational institutions, particularly Islamic schools, in managing communication effectively to build sustainable relationships with stakeholders. The increasing demand for transparency and accountability in a dynamic social environment further complicates this issue. Without proper communication management, schools risk experiencing a decline in public trust and institutional credibility. Therefore, the need for a strategic and systematic public relations (PR) management approach becomes highly urgent (Hakim & Rozi, 2024).

Islamic schools, as part of the national education system, possess distinctive characteristics by integrating Islamic values with formal educational curricula. This uniqueness presents both opportunities and challenges in establishing relationships with various stakeholders, including parents, communities, government bodies, and strategic partners (Mustofa, 2025). The problem is not only about delivering information but also about ensuring that communication reflects institutional values consistently. In many cases, communication practices in schools are still fragmented and lack coordination, which can lead to misunderstandings and weaken institutional positioning. Therefore, a comprehensive solution is required through the implementation of integrated public relations management that aligns all communication activities with the vision and mission of the institution (Lammers, 2011).

To address this problem, integrated public relations management offers a strategic framework that combines various communication functions into a unified system. This approach emphasizes the alignment between internal and external communication processes to support organizational goals effectively (Gitaswari & Kusumadinata, 2024). In Islamic schools, this integration involves collaboration among school leaders, teachers, administrative staff, and PR units to ensure consistent messaging. Additionally, the utilization of both conventional and digital media plays a crucial role in enhancing communication effectiveness. The rapid development of digital technology requires schools to adapt by using social media and online platforms as communication tools. However, such utilization must remain grounded in ethical principles and Islamic values. Thus, strengthening managerial capacity in public relations becomes a key solution to improving communication quality in Islamic educational institutions.

Previous studies have examined the role of public relations in educational settings; however, most of them tend to position PR as a technical and administrative function rather than a strategic one (Dozier & Grunig, 2013). Research focusing specifically on the integration of public relations management in Islamic schools remains limited. Existing studies often fail to address the importance of coordination among organizational units and the incorporation of Islamic values into communication practices. As a result, many educational institutions still



implement partial and less effective communication strategies. Furthermore, studies that explore the relationship between PR management and stakeholder engagement in Islamic schools are still insufficient. This gap indicates the need for more comprehensive research that examines PR management from a strategic and integrative perspective.

From a theoretical standpoint, integrated public relations management can be understood through strategic communication theory and stakeholder theory. These perspectives emphasize that organizations must be capable of identifying, understanding, and responding to the needs of various stakeholders. Islamic schools, in this regard, function as dynamic entities that continuously interact with their environment. Effective communication strategies contribute to strengthening institutional legitimacy and public trust, while ineffective communication may lead to reputational decline (Alwajir, 2018). Moreover, integrating Islamic values into communication practices provides an ethical and normative foundation that distinguishes Islamic schools from other educational institutions. This integration is essential to ensure that public relations practices are not only effective but also aligned with moral principles (Ansari & Nurjaman, 2025).

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on developing an integrated public relations management model that is contextualized within Islamic educational institutions. Unlike previous studies that treat PR as a separate or technical function, this research emphasizes a holistic approach that combines strategic management, stakeholder engagement, and Islamic ethical values. Additionally, this study seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing a systematic analysis of PR implementation in Islamic schools. This approach contributes to the development of a more adaptive and applicable model of public relations management in the context of contemporary educational challenges.

Based on the above discussion, the objective of this study is to analyze the implementation of integrated public relations management in building relationships between Islamic schools and stakeholders. This study aims to identify the strategies employed, the supporting and inhibiting factors, and their impact on enhancing public trust (Budiarti et al., 2023). Furthermore, this research intends to formulate an adaptive public relations management model that responds to social dynamics and technological advancements. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the field of Islamic education management and practically serve as a reference for school administrators in optimizing public relations functions. Ultimately, strengthening integrated public relations management is expected to foster harmonious, collaborative, and sustainable relationships between Islamic schools and stakeholders, thereby enhancing the quality and competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions at both local and global levels.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of integrated public relations management in building relationships between Islamic schools and stakeholders. The qualitative approach is selected because this research emphasizes the exploration of processes, meanings, and interaction dynamics



within public relations practices in the school environment. The case study design enables a comprehensive examination of phenomena within real and specific contexts. The research setting is determined purposively in Islamic schools that have implemented a structured public relations management system and demonstrate active engagement with various stakeholders.

The research subjects, or target participants, consist of school principals, vice principals in charge of public relations, teachers, administrative staff, parent representatives, and relevant external partners. Informants are selected using a purposive sampling technique based on their roles, responsibilities, and level of involvement in institutional communication activities. This selection ensures that the data obtained is relevant, rich, and capable of providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Data collection techniques in this study include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews are conducted to explore information related to the planning, strategies, implementation, and evaluation of integrated public relations management. Participatory observation is carried out to directly examine communication practices, both internal and external, within school activities. Meanwhile, documentation studies involve the analysis of public relations planning documents, activity reports, publication archives, and digital communication media utilized by the schools.

The research instruments are developed in the form of interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation checklists. The interview guidelines are designed based on key indicators of integrated public relations management, including planning, implementation, coordination, and evaluation aspects. Observation sheets are used to record communication interactions and practices occurring in real situations, while documentation checklists serve to systematically identify relevant written and digital data. The development of these instruments refers to the research objectives and theoretical framework to ensure data relevance and depth.

Data analysis is conducted using thematic analysis techniques through several systematic stages. The process begins with data reduction, followed by data categorization and theme identification. The researcher applies open coding to identify initial categories, which is then continued with axial coding to determine relationships between concepts. Furthermore, interpretations are developed by linking empirical findings with the theoretical framework of public relations management and stakeholder theory. Data analysis is conducted continuously from the data collection stage until the conclusion drawing phase.

To ensure data validity and reliability, this study applies source and method triangulation techniques, as well as member checking with key informants. In addition, reliability is strengthened through audit trails and detailed documentation of the research process. Ethical considerations are also maintained by ensuring the confidentiality of informants' identities and obtaining informed consent for participation. The results of the analysis are presented in a descriptive-analytical narrative that highlights the integration of communication strategies and their impact on stakeholder relationships. Through this methodological approach, the study is expected to provide both empirical and conceptual contributions to the development of integrated public relations management in Islamic schools.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Integrated Public Relations Planning

The research findings indicate that integrated public relations management in Islamic schools has been systematically designed through annual strategic planning. This planning includes communication needs analysis, stakeholder mapping, and the determination of key messages aligned with the institution's vision and mission (Alfi, 2025). The public relations unit does not merely function as a technical executor of publications but is also involved in strategic decision-making alongside school leadership. Coordination among work units is conducted in a structured manner through regular meetings and periodic reporting systems, enabling consistent integration of internal and external communication (Sholihah, 2018).

Table 1. Components of Integrated Public Relations Planning.

Component	Description
Communication needs analysis	Identification of internal and external information needs
Stakeholder mapping	Classification of parties based on their interests and influence
Key messages	Determination of messages aligned with the school's vision and mission
Internal coordination	Regular meetings and reporting systems
Leadership involvement	Strategic decision-making

Table 1 demonstrates that public relations planning is conducted comprehensively and systematically, forming the primary foundation for the successful implementation of integrated communication.

2. Internal Communication Practices

The findings from observations show that internal communication is carried out dialogically among school leaders, teachers, and administrative staff. Strategic information is conveyed transparently through deliberative forums and internal communication media. This pattern fosters a sense of ownership and collective responsibility for the institution's image (Gond & Piani, 2013). Strong organizational cohesion contributes to the consistency of messages delivered to the public (Gazdic-Aleric et al., 2016).

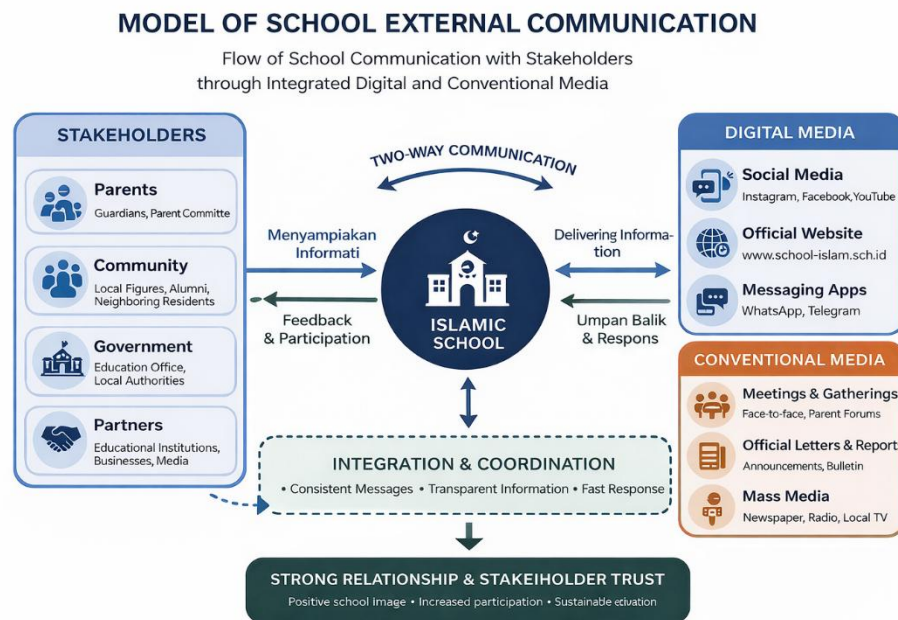
3. External Communication Strategy

Schools utilize various communication channels such as social media, official websites, and messaging applications to deliver information quickly and responsively (Supriyanto et al., 2024).



In addition, relationships with local mass media are developed to expand the reach of publications. Information transparency has been proven to enhance parental trust and participation in school activities.

Figure 1. External Communication Model of the School



Description: This figure illustrates the communication flow between the school and its stakeholders through integrated digital and conventional media.

4. Stakeholder Mapping and Approach

Schools conduct stakeholder mapping systematically based on levels of interest and influence (Winoto, 2021). Each stakeholder group receives a different communication approach tailored to its characteristics. This approach reflects an adaptive and relevant communication strategy.

5. Integration of Islamic Values

The findings indicate that values such as honesty, trustworthiness, and deliberation form the foundation of all communication activities (Surahman, 2021). Transparency and ethical communication strengthen the school's moral legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders, resulting in more harmonious and sustainable relationships.

6. Implementation of Stakeholder Perspective



Schools actively identify stakeholder needs through surveys, discussion forums, and periodic evaluations. A participatory two-way communication approach enhances trust and mutual commitment (Alemi et al., 2012).

7. Impact of Public Relations Implementation

The implementation of integrated public relations management contributes to an increase in the school's reputation, a rise in the number of applicants, and greater parental participation (Manalu & Silalahi, 2025). Furthermore, it opens opportunities for collaboration with various external institutions.

8. Implementation Challenges

The main challenges include limited human resources with communication competencies, dual workloads, and the need for improved digital skills (Situmorang et al., 2024).

9. Adaptation to Digital Transformation

Schools have utilized digital media interactively, not only as an informational tool but also as a responsive medium to stakeholder needs (Purike et al., 2022). However, digital content management still requires consistency and proper monitoring.

The findings confirm that integrated public relations management plays a strategic role in building relationships between Islamic schools and stakeholders. The integration of internal and external communication creates message consistency and strengthens institutional identity (Hasanah et al., 2023). These findings align with the concept of strategic communication, which emphasizes cross-functional coordination within organizations.

Compared to previous studies that tend to position public relations as a technical function (Dozier & Grunig, 2013), this study demonstrates that public relations plays a strategic role in decision-making and stakeholder relationship management. This represents a key novelty by positioning public relations as an integral part of school management.

Furthermore, the integration of Islamic values in communication practices serves as a distinguishing factor compared to other studies. Ethical values such as honesty and trustworthiness not only function as normative principles but also have a tangible impact on increasing stakeholder trust. These findings reinforce previous research emphasizing the importance of ethical dimensions in organizational communication (Ansari & Nurjaman, 2025).

From the perspective of stakeholder theory, the findings also demonstrate alignment with the concept of long-term trust-based relationships (Alemi et al., 2012). Stakeholder involvement in communication processes enhances institutional legitimacy and organizational sustainability. Therefore, this study provides empirical contributions to the development of strategic



communication theory within the context of Islamic education.

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it enriches the field of Islamic education management by integrating public relations, stakeholder theory, and Islamic values. Practically, it offers guidance for school administrators in developing integrated, adaptive, and value-based communication strategies to enhance public trust and institutional competitiveness (Nst et al., 2025).

Future research is recommended to employ quantitative or mixed-method approaches to measure the effectiveness of public relations more objectively. Further studies may also examine the implementation of public relations across various levels of Islamic education to achieve broader generalization. The development of digital public relations models based on emerging technologies is also essential to address the dynamics of digital transformation in organizational communication. In addition, future research should explore more deeply the influence of human resource competencies on the success of organizational communication, particularly in supporting the effectiveness of integrated public relations management.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, this study concludes that integrated public relations management plays a strategic role in building and strengthening relationships between Islamic schools and stakeholders, in line with the research objective. The integration of internal and external communication has proven effective in creating message consistency and reinforcing institutional identity. The involvement of school leaders in communication planning, structured coordination among organizational units, and the adaptive use of digital media are key factors supporting the successful implementation of public relations strategies. In addition, the application of Islamic values such as honesty, trustworthiness, and deliberation provides a strong moral foundation that enhances public trust and encourages stakeholder participation in school programs.

Furthermore, the study highlights that a dialogical and participatory two-way communication approach serves as the main foundation for establishing harmonious and sustainable stakeholder relationships. Systematic stakeholder mapping enables schools to design more relevant and targeted communication strategies. The implementation of integrated public relations management has a tangible impact on improving school reputation, increasing student enrollment, and expanding institutional collaboration. However, challenges remain, particularly in terms of limited human resources and the need to enhance competencies in digital communication. This indicates that strengthening institutional capacity and supporting professional development in public relations are essential for ensuring program sustainability.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic education management by integrating strategic communication and stakeholder theory within the context of Islamic schools. The essential finding of this research lies in the formulation of integrated public relations management as a holistic and value-based communication model that combines strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and Islamic ethical principles. Practically, the findings provide guidance for school administrators in developing sustainable communication systems. Overall, this study



emphasizes that the synergy between schools and stakeholders, supported by integrated and value-based communication management, constitutes a fundamental element in enhancing the quality, sustainability, and global competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions.

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