

Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital Reputation Restoration Strategy in the Case of Swapped Baby

Stefanny Lasmanogi Simanjuntak¹, Anang Sujoko², Antoni³

^{1,2,3}Brawijaya University, Malang, Indonesia

Email: stefannysimanjuntak28@gmail.com

Abstract

A good reputation is one of the main factors for successful performance, but its implementation is still being questioned in various agencies or organizations in Indonesia. This qualitative study aims to analyze and evaluate the success of the reputation restoration strategy for Mitra Sejati Hospital in Medan after the baby are swapped. This research involved two key informants (public relations and supervisors) who handled the case. The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman analysis techniques. The results of this study informed that Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital was quite slow in providing an initial response, so that the case was spread through the media. Furthermore, the hospital then used three stages, namely mortification, compensation, and collective action. Following up on the findings in this study, the reputation management of Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital must be further optimized through various training and special learning resources.

Keywords: Restoration strategy, Reputation Management, Mitra Sejati Medan.

A. INTRODUCTION

Creating a good reputation and organizational performance is a topic that has been discussed for the last two decades. Organizations or companies view trust as an important concept. Reputation is one of the determining factors in efforts to improve and maintain the existence of a company, especially in this era of fast communication. The process of building, maintaining and enhancing a reputation is longer than building, maintaining and enhancing an image and brand. Reputation is real and yet not real at the same time. Reputation is first and foremost about what an organisation does. What it produces and how it behaves, it is based on reality. That's because an organisation's reputation belongs to others. You are whatever other people say as you are "corporate image" is about "perceptions not facts". In this sense, reputation is not reality (Langham, 2018).

As a health organization, a hospital must be able to have a good reputation so that its existence is maintained. The success of the hospital as an organization depends on developing and maintaining relationships with strategic publics or stakeholders. Success also depends on strengthening the organization's reputation or brand equity in the minds of stakeholders. Conflicts between stakeholders and

organizations require immediate attention and resolution. According to Plowman, et al(2013) "...the last ability that has proven positive for a PR is the concept of mutual control ...". When a hospital is hit by an issue, then that issue develops into a crisis due to slow handling, it will open up opportunities to create a negative reputation for the hospital. Basically, it is very important to have the ability to navigate apology situations given the high cost of creating a reputation.

Crises that can damage the image and brand can be defined as temporary failures due to actual organizational/company decisions that can be avoided and resolved under different time pressures (Kranz, et al., 2013). Therefore, it is very important for an organization/company to develop multiple response strategies, because society simultaneously responds differently. Appropriate crisis resolution is not limited to price recalls, product recalls, timely communications, process improvements, apologies, and compensation which primarily meet consumer expectations (Cleeren, et al., 2013; Khamitov et al., 2020). Companies that fail to resolve crises well not only damage their reputations but can also threaten entire industry lines. Typical examples, such as the Chinese dairy product incident at the Sanlu organization in 2008, the Ctrip information leak incident in 2014, the shooting of "indecent videos" at Uniqlo in 2015, and the Samsung phone explosion issue in 2017 have become widely accepted.

Some experts like Vujnovic (2004) and Grunig (2009) (quoted from Kim. S, Kim. J, Tam, & Kim. G, 2015: 404) has explained that how organizations perceive conflict and pressure from their environment and public determines what public relations strategy the organization formulates to meet their goal. Siomkos & Kurzbard (1994) originally suggested that if consumers have positive emotions, they will show a tendency to forgive the offended behavior. Ren & Jing (2015) focus on how corporate coping behaviors and recovery strategies can reduce consumer emotions and reactions before and after a crisis, as well as gain forgiveness from consumers. Lee (2019) examines public attitudes and forgiveness towards organizations in corporate crises. This implies that the existing studies generally pay more attention to concealing firms and consumers, pleading that it is important to improve relations between the two parties when a corporate crisis occurs.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Reputation Management

Most definitions of corporate reputation management emphasize the role of organizational leaders and PR in influencing the perceptions of the organization held by external stakeholders (Barens, 2016:403; Elsbach, 2012:466). An important goal for reputation-sensitive organizations is to speak with "one voice" (Forman, 2002) or at least achieve a strong level of internal "orchestration" (Riel, 2007) or integration of communication activities under the same corporate umbrella (Schultz, 2001).

According to Griffin (2014) on many occasions, a company's reputation determines the location of commercial interests, shareholders, morale, customer

base, and the company's stock price. Reputation is a valuable long-term strategic asset that must manage the organization proactively (Garcia, 2021). Reputation is fragile but there is nothing that a well-structured rebuilding cannot beget. Under the guidance of great management and an envisaging leadership team, brand consolidation becomes a promising goal (Waddington, 2018). In simple terms, communication made by a company or organization must follow the behavior and performance of members of the organization in order to build a good reputation, not just mere imagery. The ability of companies or organizations to maintain their viability can depend on their reputation.

2. Measuring Reputation

Every aspect of every element that constitutes reputation can be measured (Langham, 2018). Reputation comes from perception and not fact. Perception is very easy to measure, reputation agencies estimate that most organizations have on average eight key audiences critical to their success, namely customers, intermediaries or retailers, commentators and experts, media, staff, government, regulators, suppliers, and business partners. Opinion surveys can measure what this audience is thinking and feeling. There are many other ways to assess what this audience is actually doing, from sales figures to laws passed to staff turnover rates.

3. Media Relations

There is one group that affects the reputation of a company or organization quickly and deeply: Media. Media relations is one of the core disciplines of public relations, corporate and organizational communications, and is often one of the most visible and impactful. Leaders who wield it often use the media as both a partner and a tool to communicate their agenda. As a communicative channel, the media constructs and conveys meaning. Therefore, communication channels not only have technical characteristics, but also social potential (Couldry, 2013). Media relations is a complex process involving organizational media relations strategists, media relations professionals, journalists, editors, and media companies (Supa, 2014).

Zoch & Molleda (2006) suggest that media relations attempt to shape the media agenda using framing (Entman, 1993), subsidized information, and agenda building (Rogers, 1988). Bentele & Nothaft (2008) show how public relations adapts to the expectations and routines of journalism in various dimensions. It involves dimensions related to object (eg selection, placement and presentation of news), temporal (timing of news), and psychosocial (psychic preconditions, organizational frameworks and routines) (Bentele & Nothaft, 2008:36). In addition, they show that journalists, news organizations and media systems are also attuned to public relations practices.

C. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis methods to evaluate the reputation restoration process at Mitra Sejati Hospital in Medan from a

scientific point of view based on the image restoration theory put forward by Benoit. The research was conducted from October 2021 to October 2022 both online and offline. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews and observations to understand case studies of babies who were switched and the hospital's reputation restoration efforts. The number of research informants interviewed was 2 people, informants were selected based on research needs and related research case studies. Furthermore, to obtain valid analysis results and conclusions, this research is limited so as not to be biased and too far away.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research found three important points made by Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital in carrying out a reputation restoration strategy, namely efforts to maintain the hospital's license, rebuild public trust, and fight for good accreditation. These three points were achieved through three stages of findings. The first finding is the mortification stage (admitting mistakes and apologizing). This is in line with the results of Nazione's research (2019) that the accused party can choose or be willing to admit guilt and ask for forgiveness. The second strategy taken by the Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital is compensation or redemption. This strategy was chosen to show a sense of responsibility and empathy on the part of the hospital. This strategy is able to persuade victims and the general public to change their attitudes and views positively towards the organization that is committed to the violation (Benoit, 2014). The final strategy chosen by the Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital is corrective action. This is in line with the results of research by Naione (2019) and Diana (2018) that corrective action is a strategy chosen by companies or organizations when facing a crisis situation which is often fatal if you don't immediately find a way out.

In this study using a qualitative constructivist or interpretive paradigm methodology, it is hoped that further research can use various methodologies such as quantitative research and mix methods, so as to be able to dig up more data and be able to present detailed planning statistics in carrying out success by the Public Relations of Mitra Sejati Hospital Medan. Explore data on aspects of implementation and evaluation of the success rate of Public Relations of Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital in cases of swapped babies by comparing similar cases in hospitals in other cities. Whether the strategies adopted are the same or different, if they are the same, are the responses received the same, bearing in mind that the main goal in recovering is to restore trust in public organizations.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, the Public Relations of Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital in a strategy to rebuild its reputation made efforts to maintain hospital licenses, rebuild public trust, and fight for a good reputation. Public relations in this activity has carried out several stages of reputation restoration planning starting from identification, communication, and influencing perceptions. Public Relations of Mitra Sejati Medan Hospital admits the mistake and apologizes for what happened

(Mortification), gives condolences to the victim (Compensation), then takes action to resolve the case (corrective action). So that Public Relations carries out the function of carrying out the process of restoring the reputation of the hospital which is also contained in the process of issue management and crisis management.

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