



Public Relations Strategy Of Sidomulyo Village Government In Maintaining A Positive Image In Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency

Rendi Ramadhan¹⁾, Muhammad Alfikri Matondang²⁾

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

rendy0603222102@uinsu.ac.id

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui strategi Hubungan Masyarakat (Public Relations) yang diterapkan oleh Pemerintah Desa Sidomulyo untuk menjaga citra positif di Kecamatan Sibiru-Biru, Kabupaten Deli Serdang. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Delapan informan dipilih menggunakan purposive sampling. Informan tersebut meliputi Kepala Desa, Sekretaris Desa, Ketua BPD, tokoh masyarakat, warga desa, dan pengurus Karang Taruna (Organisasi Pemuda). Pengumpulan data melibatkan observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Pemerintah Desa Sidomulyo menerapkan berbagai strategi Hubungan Masyarakat melalui komunikasi dua arah dengan masyarakat, mengadakan rapat desa, transparansi informasi, memanfaatkan media sosial sebagai sarana komunikasi publik, dan memberikan pelayanan publik yang responsif. Strategi-strategi ini efektif dalam meningkatkan kepercayaan masyarakat terhadap pemerintah desa, sehingga menjaga citra positifnya. Faktor pendukung strategi ini meliputi kepemimpinan komunikatif, dukungan dari organisasi masyarakat, pengelolaan anggaran yang transparan, dan partisipasi masyarakat. Faktor penghambat meliputi keterbatasan sumber daya manusia, rendahnya literasi digital di kalangan sebagian warga, dan partisipasi masyarakat yang tidak merata.

Kata kunci : Hubungan Masyarakat, Pemerintahan Desa, Citra Positif, Komunikasi Publik.

Abstract

This study aims to determine the Public Relations strategies employed by the Sidomulyo Village Government to maintain a positive image in Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency. This study employed qualitative methods with a descriptive approach. Eight informants were selected using purposive sampling. These included the Village Head, Village Secretary, BPD Chair, community leaders, village residents, and Karang Taruna (Youth Organization) administrators. Data collection involved observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that the Sidomulyo Village Government implements various Public Relations strategies through two-way communication with the community, holding village meetings, information transparency, utilizing social media as a means of public communication, and providing responsive public services. These strategies have been effective in increasing public trust in the village government, thereby maintaining its positive image. Supporting factors for these strategies include communicative leadership, support from community organizations, transparent budget management, and community participation. Inhibiting factors include limited human resources, low digital literacy among some residents, and unequal community participation.

Keywords: Public Relations, Village Government, Positive Image, Public Communication.



INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the digital era has brought significant changes to the relationship between government and society. The public now has broader access to a variety of information, leading to increasing demands for openness, transparency, and government accountability. In this environment, the government is required not only to perform its public service functions but also to build effective communication to foster harmonious relationships with the public.

Public relations (PR) is a crucial instrument in supporting effective communication between the government and the public. Public relations plays a strategic role in government as a communication bridge connecting government interests with public needs. Through PR activities, the government can convey information, policies, and development programs, and receive input and aspirations from the public.

Village governments, as the government organizations closest to the community, have a significant responsibility in building public trust. Public trust is a key asset for village governments in implementing development programs and public services. Without public trust, various government policies and programs will struggle to gain maximum support.

Sidomulyo Village, located in the Sibiru-biru District, Deli Serdang Regency, is one of the villages continuously striving to improve the quality of public services and village development. In implementing these various programs, the Sidomulyo Village Government is inextricably linked to the need to build a positive image within the community. A positive image is crucial because it directly relates to the level of public trust in the village government.

Building a positive image cannot be achieved instantly; it requires a planned and sustainable communication strategy. The village government must be able to convey information openly, provide good service, and forge harmonious relationships with all elements of society. Furthermore, the development of social media presents both challenges and opportunities for the village government in building a positive image. Information disseminated through social media can accelerate the dissemination of information to the public, but on the other hand, it can also generate negative opinions if not managed properly.

Given these conditions, Public Relations strategy is a crucial aspect to examine. This research focuses on how the Sidomulyo Village Government implements Public Relations strategies to maintain a positive image in the Sibiru-biru District, Deli Serdang Regency, as well as the factors that support and hinder its implementation.

METHODS

This research was conducted in Sidomulyo Village, Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2025–2026. This study employed a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the field phenomena related to the Public Relations strategies implemented by the Sidomulyo Village Government to maintain a positive image within the community. The research location was Sidomulyo Village, Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency. The selection of the research location was based on the consideration that Sidomulyo Village is one of the villages actively implementing various development and public service programs and implementing various forms of communication with the community to support the creation of a positive village government image.

The informant selection technique in this study used purposive sampling, a technique of selecting informants based on specific considerations, namely those deemed to have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the implementation of the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations strategy. Informants were selected because they were deemed capable of providing relevant and in-depth information in line with the research objectives. The research informants consisted of eight people, consisting of the Sidomulyo Village Head, the Village Secretary, the Head of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), community leaders, three Sidomulyo Village residents, and one administrator of the United Young Youth Organization (Karang Taruna).



Muda Bersatu). The diversity of informants aimed to obtain comprehensive data regarding the implementation of the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations strategy from various perspectives.

Table 1. Identity of Research Informants

No	Informan	Position/Status
1	Satriawan	Sidomulyo Village Head
2	Samsidar, A.Md.	Village Secretary
3	Head of the Sidomulyo Village BPD	BPD Chairperson
4	Chairul Anwar	Community Leader/Head of Hamlet I
5	Resident 1	Sidomulyo Village Community
6	Resident 2	Sidomulyo Village Community
7	Resident 3	Sidomulyo Village Community
8	Manager of the United Youth Organization	Youth Organization

Data collection techniques included observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly observe the communication activities carried out by the village government with the community. In-depth interviews were conducted with predetermined informants to obtain information regarding communication strategies, information transparency, public services, and the village government's efforts to maintain a positive image. Documentation was used to supplement the research data, including activity photos, village government documents, activity reports, and other supporting documents relevant to the research.

Data analysis in this study employed an interactive analysis model consisting of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing data relevant to the research objectives. Data presentation was done in descriptive form to facilitate researchers in understanding the research findings. Conclusions were then drawn based on the results of the data analysis.

To ensure data validity, this study employed source triangulation techniques. Triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from various informants, namely the Village Head, village officials, community leaders, community organizations, and the Sidomulyo Village community. This technique aims to increase the validity and credibility of the data so that the research results obtained can be scientifically accounted for.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sidomulyo Village is located in the Sibiru-biru District, Deli Serdang Regency. Village administration is led by Village Head Satriawan, supported by village officials and various community organizations. The village government structure consists of the Village Head, Village Secretary, Head of General Affairs, Head of Finance, Head of Planning, Head of Service Section, Head of Welfare Section, Head of Government Section, and six hamlet heads. In addition, there are various village institutions such as the Village Consultative Body (BPD), Community Empowerment Institute (LPM), Family Welfare Movement (PKK), Karang Taruna Muda Bersatu (United Youth Organization), BUMDes SIDG Sejahtera (Village-Owned Enterprise), Babinsa (Village Supervisory Agency), Bhabinkamtibmas (Community Police), Linmas (Community Health Center), and Early Childhood Education (PAUD). According to the 2025 Village Budget (APBDes), Sidomulyo Village's total revenue is IDR 2,181,740,000, derived from Village Funds, Village Fund Allocations, and Tax Revenue Sharing. These funds are used for governance, village development, community empowerment, community development, disaster management, and social assistance.

Two-Way Communication Strategy

An interview with the Head of Sidomulyo Village, Satriawan, revealed that two-way communication is the primary strategy implemented by the village government to maintain a positive image within the community. The village government routinely holds village meetings

before establishing various development programs and policies related to community interests. The Head of Sidomulyo Village stated:

"We always consult with the community first on every development activity. We want the community to be aware of the village's programs and provide input so that development meets the community's needs." (I-1).

This statement demonstrates that the Sidomulyo Village Government not only acts as a provider of information but also provides the community with the opportunity to express their aspirations, criticisms, and suggestions regarding village development implementation. Through open communication, the village government can directly understand community needs, thus ensuring more targeted program implementation.

This research finding aligns with the Public Relations theory proposed by Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2009), which states that Public Relations is a management function aimed at building mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics. In the context of village government, this relationship is realized through community involvement in the decision-making process and implementation of village development.

Furthermore, the communication strategy implemented by the Sidomulyo Village Government aligns with the concept of two-way communication proposed by Rosady Ruslan (2012). According to Ruslan, two-way communication enables the exchange of information between organizations and the public, creating harmonious relationships and mutual understanding. Through village deliberations and direct communication with the community, the Sidomulyo Village Government not only conveys information but also receives various input that forms the basis for formulating village policies.

The success of this two-way communication is evident in the increased community participation in various village activities and the growing public trust in the village government. Thus, two-way communication is an effective Public Relations strategy in maintaining a positive image for the Sidomulyo Village Government in the Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency.

Information Transparency and Village Budget Management

Information transparency is one of the Public Relations strategies implemented by the Sidomulyo Village Government to maintain a positive image within the community. This transparency is achieved through the open and continuous dissemination of various information regarding government activities, development programs, and the use of the Village Budget (APBDes) to the public.

An interview with the Sidomulyo Village Secretary, Samsidar, A.Md., revealed that the village government utilizes various communication media to convey information to the public.

"We use WhatsApp groups, village information boards, and social media as a means of conveying information to the public to make it more transparent and accessible." (I-2).

This statement demonstrates that the Sidomulyo Village Government strives to create information transparency so that the public can learn about the various programs and activities implemented by the village government. This transparency is achieved not only through digital media but also through village deliberation forums that directly involve the community.

Transparency of information is also evident in the management of the 2025 Village Budget (APBDes). Based on APBDes data, Sidomulyo Village's total revenue reached IDR 2,181,740,000, derived from Village Funds, Village Fund Allocations, and Tax Revenue Sharing. This budget is allocated for village governance, village development, community development, community empowerment, disaster management, and social assistance. The Sidomulyo Village Government regularly provides information on village budget use to the community through village meetings and public information media. This transparency in budget management provides the community with the opportunity to understand and monitor the implementation of development programs undertaken by the village government. Interviews with the Head of the Sidomulyo Village BPD (Village Consultative Body) indicate that the village government's transparency in providing budget information has increased public trust in the village government.



"The village government is quite open with the community regarding the use of village funds and development implementation. This has led to greater public trust in village programs (1-3)."

This research finding aligns with the image theory proposed by Jefkins (2004), which states that image is formed based on experiences and information received by the public. The transparency of information provided by the Sidomulyo Village Government provides a positive experience to the community, thus forming a positive perception of the village government. In addition, information transparency is also in line with the Public Relations function according to Ruslan (2012), namely providing information services to the public and building harmonious relationships between organizations and the community. In the context of this research, the transparency of information regarding the Village Budget (APBDes) is one of the factors supporting the formation of a positive image of the Sidomulyo Village Government. Thus, information transparency and accountable management of the APBDes are effective Public Relations strategies in increasing public trust and maintaining a positive image of the Sidomulyo Village Government in Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency.

Utilizing Social Media as a Means of Public Communication

Developments in information and communication technology have encouraged the government to utilize digital media as a means of conveying information to the public. In the context of village government, social media has become a crucial public relations tool for building effective, fast, and easily accessible communication with the public. Based on research, the Sidomulyo Village Government utilizes social media and WhatsApp groups as a means of public communication. These media are used to convey information about development programs, village activities, administrative services, and various other important information related to community interests. The Sidomulyo Village Secretary, Samsidar, A.Md., explained that the use of social media aims to accelerate the dissemination of information to the public.

"We use WhatsApp groups and village social media to convey information about village activities so that the public can stay informed about village developments quickly and easily."

Through the use of social media, the public can obtain information more effectively without having to visit the village office in person. Furthermore, social media also provides a platform for the public to provide responses, questions, and input regarding village government programs and activities. Interviews with Sidomulyo Village residents indicate that social media is beneficial in increasing public access to information about village activities.

"We often receive information about village activities through WhatsApp groups, so information is received more quickly, and the public can stay informed about the activities being carried out by the village government (1-5)."

The use of social media as a means of public communication demonstrates the Sidomulyo Village Government's adaptation to developments in communication technology in the digital era. Social media serves not only as a means of publication but also as a medium for interaction between the village government and the community. This research finding aligns with research by Khalid and Nadiroh (2024), which states that the use of social media is an effective Public Relations strategy in building and maintaining a positive image of government institutions. Social media allows for the widespread, rapid, and efficient dissemination of information, thereby increasing public information transparency.

Furthermore, the use of social media aligns with the Public Relations function according to Ruslan (2012), which is to provide information services to the public and build harmonious relationships with the community. Through social media, the Sidomulyo Village Government can establish closer communication with the community and increase community participation in various village activities. However, this study also identified obstacles to the use of social media, namely the low digital literacy of some residents, particularly the elderly who are not yet accustomed to using digital media. Therefore, the village government continues to combine the use of social media with direct communication through village deliberations, community meetings, and village information boards. Thus, utilizing social media as a means of public communication

has become a crucial part of the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations strategy to maintain a positive image, increase information transparency, and strengthen the relationship between the village government and the community.

Public Service and Positive Image Building

Public service is a key indicator in assessing village government performance. Good service quality not only facilitates access to administrative services for the public but also contributes to the positive image of the village government. Therefore, the Sidomulyo Village Government strives to provide fast, easy, and responsive services to the public. Based on research results, the community believes that the services provided by the Sidomulyo Village Government have been running quite well. Village officials are considered easy to contact, friendly in providing services, and capable of providing solutions to the community's various administrative needs. One Sidomulyo Village resident (I-5) stated:

"Service at the village office is quite fast, and village officials are easy to reach when people need administrative assistance." (I-5)

This statement indicates that the community directly experiences the quality of service provided by the village government. Easy access to administrative services is one factor contributing to the formation of a positive public perception of the village government. A similar sentiment was echoed by another informant (I-6), who assessed that the village government is quite responsive in providing information and services to the community.

"When people need information or administrative assistance, village officials are quick to provide services, so they feel helped." (I-6)

Responsive public services reflect the village government's commitment to meeting community needs. A friendly attitude, openness in providing information, and speed of service are factors that can increase community satisfaction with village government services. Based on interviews with community leaders (I-4), a good relationship between the village government and the community is also evident in the village government's involvement in various social and religious activities organized by the community.

"The village head and village officials often attend social and religious activities, thus maintaining relationships with the community" (I-4).

This involvement demonstrates that public services are not only realized through administrative services at the village office, but also through the village government's presence in the community's social life. This close relationship can create harmonious relationships and increase community trust in the village government. This research finding aligns with the image theory proposed by Jefkins (2004), which states that image is formed through experiences and information received by the public. Community experiences in receiving good service will shape positive perceptions of the organization. In the context of this research, the community's experience in receiving fast, friendly, and accessible services is a crucial factor in building a positive image of the Sidomulyo Village Government.

These findings also align with research by Sari (2024), which explains that the quality of public services and effective communication significantly influence the positive image of government institutions. The better the service provided, the higher the level of public trust in the government. Therefore, responsive, accessible, and community-oriented public services are an effective Public Relations strategy in building and maintaining a positive image of the Sidomulyo Village Government in Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency.

Supporting Factors for the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations Strategy

The success of the Sidomulyo Village Government's public relations strategy in maintaining a positive image is inseparable from the presence of various supporting factors that play a role in strengthening the relationship between the village government and the community. These factors are crucial for creating effective communication and increasing public trust in the village government. The first supporting factor is the communicative and open leadership of the



village head. Based on interviews, the Sidomulyo Village Head actively communicates with the community through village meetings, social activities, and various community forums. This open attitude provides a space for the community to express their aspirations, criticisms, and suggestions regarding village development implementation.

The second supporting factor is the active support of village officials and community organizations. The presence of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), Community Empowerment Institution (LPM), Family Welfare Movement (PKK), Karang Taruna Muda Bersatu (United Youth Organization), and other community organizations assist the village government in disseminating information and implementing various development programs. Good cooperation between the village government and community organizations fosters harmonious relations with the community.

The third supporting factor is transparency in the management of the Village Budget (APBDes) and openness to public information. The Sidomulyo Village Government regularly provides information to the community regarding village budget utilization, development implementation, and government programs. This transparency increases public trust because they can directly monitor and monitor the implementation of village development.

The fourth supporting factor is the utilization of various communication media. The Sidomulyo Village Government utilizes WhatsApp groups, social media, village information boards, and face-to-face communication as a means of conveying information to the community. The use of various communication media helps accelerate information dissemination and increases community involvement in village activities.

Furthermore, the high level of community participation in various village activities is also a crucial supporting factor. Community involvement in village deliberations, social activities, and development programs demonstrates a good relationship between the village government and the community. High community participation also strengthens the positive image of the Sidomulyo Village Government as an open government that involves the community in the development process. With these various supporting factors, the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations strategy can be effective in building community trust and maintaining a positive image of the village government.

Inhibitors of the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations Strategy

Although the Sidomulyo Village Government's Public Relations strategy has been well-executed, this study identified several inhibiting factors that could impact the effectiveness of public communication and the development of a positive image of the village government. The first inhibiting factor is limited human resources in managing public communications. Not all village officials have the same capabilities in managing communication media or conveying information to the public effectively. This situation can affect the speed and quality of information dissemination to the public.

The second inhibiting factor is the low level of digital literacy among some residents. Although the village government has utilized social media and WhatsApp groups as public communication channels, some residents, particularly the elderly, are still unfamiliar with digital technology. As a result, not all information conveyed through digital media is received equally by the community. The third inhibiting factor is unequal community participation. Based on the research results, some residents are still less active in participating in village meetings and community activities. This low level of participation can reduce the effectiveness of two-way communication between the village government and the community.

Another inhibiting factor is the emergence of inaccurate information or misunderstandings within the community. In some situations, incomplete information can lead to differing perceptions among the community. Therefore, the village government needs to clarify and disseminate information quickly to avoid generating negative opinions that could impact the village government's image.

The findings of this study indicate that obstacles to implementing Public Relations



strategies stem not only from internal factors within the village government but also from external factors related to community conditions. Therefore, ongoing efforts are needed to improve human resource capacity, expand access to information, and encourage community participation in various village activities.

Despite these obstacles, the Sidomulyo Village Government continues to strive to maintain good communication with the community through persuasive approaches, deliberation, and information transparency. These efforts are crucial in maintaining public trust and maintaining a positive image of the village government in Sibiru-Biru District, Deli Serdang Regency. Based on the research findings, the Public Relations strategy implemented by the Sidomulyo Village Government to maintain a positive image is implemented through two-way communication with the community, information transparency, utilization of social media, and responsive public services. These four strategies mutually support each other in building a harmonious relationship between the village government and the community.

Two-way communication through village deliberations provides a space for the community to express their aspirations and participate in the village development process. Transparency of information, demonstrated through the dissemination of program information and the management of the Village Budget (APBDes), increases public trust in the village government. Furthermore, the use of social media and WhatsApp groups helps expedite the dissemination of information to the public, while responsive public services provide a positive experience for the community in interacting with the village government.

Research findings indicate that information transparency, public participation, and the quality of public services are key factors contributing to the positive image of the Sidomulyo Village Government. Despite several obstacles, such as limited human resources, low digital literacy among some residents, and uneven participation, the village government continues to strive to maintain good communication with the community through a participatory and sustainable approach.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the Sidomulyo Village Government implemented a Public Relations strategy through two-way communication, village deliberations, information transparency, social media utilization, and responsive public services. This strategy contributed to increasing public trust, strengthening the relationship between the village government and the community, and maintaining a positive image of the village government. Supporting factors for this strategy include communicative leadership, support from community institutions, and transparency in village budget management. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors faced were limited human resources, low digital literacy among some residents, and unequal community participation. Thus, the success of the village government's Public Relations strategy is largely determined by the ability to build open, participatory, and sustainable communication with the community. The Sidomulyo Village Government needs to continue to improve the quality of public communication with the community. In addition, the use of social media needs to be optimized as a means of public service and dissemination of public information. Public Relations training is needed for village officials to improve public communication skills. The village government needs to increase community participation through empowerment programs and community social activities. Further research is expected to develop studies on village government Public Relations with a broader approach.

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