Issues Related to the Organization of Public Relations Activities in General Secondary Schools

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Abstract

In recent years, the implemented reforms in Uzbekistan in the field of education management, particularly in the management of general secondary education, are aimed at solving serious and tender problems in the system. And we know that the public relations serve the development of the society. Nowadays, the activities of almost all workplaces and organizations in our country are developed based on public relations (PR). Development of public relations of educational institutions, especially, public educational institutions, serves the development of the educational institution. This article provides information on the issues of organizing PR activities of general secondary educational institutions.

Keywords: public relations (PR), general secondary school, educational services, image, brand, school management.


Introduction

It is known that our government has been implementing a range of strategic resolutions and projects targeted to eliminate several problems, such as the efficiency of education in general secondary schools, improving the level of students’ achievement, fostering teachers’ reputation and the prestige of schools in the society. We can list the following regulatory documents as the updated Law "On Education" of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2020), "National Educational Program" (2021), Presidential Decree No. PF-4947 of the Republic of Uzbekistan, "On the Strategy of Actions for Further Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan", dated February 7, 2017, Decree No. PF-5198 "On Measures to Fundamentally Improve the Management of the Preschool Education System", dated September 30, 2017, Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-3304 "On improving the activities of the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan", dated September 30, 2017, Resolution No.187 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Approval of the State Educational Standards of General Secondary and Secondary Special, Vocational Education", dated April 6, 2017, and the tasks in the Action Plan for the development of the education
sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2013-2017 and other similar regulatory and legal documents, as well as the work being carried out to provide financial support to the teachers of general secondary schools is the basis for increasing the prestige of general education institutions in our society.

However, it can be said that in addition to the reforms carried out by our government, it is necessary for public representatives to feel the appropriate responsibility for the development of school activities, to strengthen their respectful attitude towards the teacher, and to make their proper contribution to the improvement of the quality of general secondary education.

**Literature Review**

It is possible to develop the general secondary schools by improving their image in the society. The process of forming and improving the image of the school directly serves as an important factor in the organization of education on a scientific basis, which is one of the strategic goals of educational management in preparing competitive graduates, as well as in the cooperation between the institution and the public aimed at a specific goal.

The establishment of public relations (PR) of the school is one of the main mechanisms in the formation of the image of general secondary schools. It can be said that several scientific researchers have been carried out in many countries of the world on the issue of setting up the PR activities of a general education institution. For example, Sumeyye Mermer's Doctoral dissertation on the topic "İnönü University Institute of Educational Sciences is the main field of education" (Malatya-2020), Ayşê Çobanoğlu's Master's dissertation "Evaluation of the school image of official and private primary schools according to the opinions of teachers and parents". (İstanbul 2011), "PR-technology in Education" by candidate of economic sciences, Vifleemsky Anatoly Borisovich, (Journal "PR in Education" No. 1, 2003.), scientific articles entitled “Peculiarities of PR technology in the sphere of Education” by Larionova Darya Sergeevna, undergraduate of the department of foreign languages of RIU named after G.V. Plekhanova, "Organization of PR activities in the outer school environment" by Agunovich Olga Nikolaevna, deputy director of educational affairs of school No 380, “PR Technology in the Sphere of Education” (Journal Theory and Practice of Modern Science, 2016, by Yu.V. Solomon, the undergraduate student of the department of "Advertising and public relations") of Orlov State Institute of Trade and Economics, and many other similar articles can be cited. Yet, the researchers on the formation of the school image or the functioning of its mechanisms have not studied in our country. But only, several scientific studies on the mechanisms of improving the image of higher education institutions can be seen.

**Materials and Methods**

General secondary educational institutions are taken as the object of the research, and the content of the institution and educational services, the role of participants, and the public community of the institution in forming the image of the school are studied in the process of investigation.

Establishing PR activities of the institution is considered to be the main mechanism for forming the image of a school. This article also analyzes the issue of forming the
PR activity of a general secondary education institution. Moreover, in the Presidential Decree No.PQ-4366 of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On additional measures to ensure the independence of mass media and the development of information services of state bodies and organizations", dated June 27, 2019, included the issue of forming and promoting a positive image of the state bodies and organizations, conducting public surveys and other forms of research on studying public opinion. General secondary education institutions, as an organization of the state and an important branch of the public education system, should actively work with their community and establish wide cooperation. This is the exact way of increasing the positive image of the school.

At this point, what it means to form public relations (PR) of an educational institution,

- PR means conducting reasonable action in cooperation with the community, holding PR engagements;
- PR is the delivery of targeted information aimed at attracting communal attention (that is, representing the interests of both the organization and the public community);
- PR refers to providing information and facts in the form of various events that introduce the type of activity of a certain person, organization, or team to the widespread public.

Public relations is a long-term planned and implemented action aimed at establishing and maintaining friendly, shared relations and mutual understanding, social education, and the subject of society. According to its philosophical essence, PR technologies are communicative relations of a certain subject; according to the methodological approach are accessibility to communication; according to character traits and structure are social-educational; methodologically, explaining and describing; it is represented by PR tools in an organizational, individual, group and collective form (S.G.Tolkacheva, 2013). The PR activity of the educational institution is to establish sincere and enthusiastic relations with the institution and customers, parents, representatives of the target public community, and state organizations.

Every general secondary educational institution should establish relations with the public community in its activities, do it with the purpose arising from its activities, and conduct mutually beneficial relations. What is the achievement through this activity:

- For the teachers and staff, It is important to learn, revive, and make appropriate conclusions and decisions for themselves, to provide information to the public community about issues, such as the work they are doing, success in the teaching and learning progression, problems, reforms, in general, the daily lesson process, student activities, and in turn, the attitude towards the work they are doing.
- As for community representatives, they will get information about how well their children are getting their education and use of educational services, how well their demands and needs are being met, and they will express their unbiased opinion.

It is not a secret that the status of general secondary educational institutions is slightly declining due to some problems arising in general secondary schools, such as, violations among students, the quality and efficiency of education is not up to the required level, today parents demand qualitative education for their children and we can often observe and overhear the information that they receive answers to these requirements from non-government educational institutions. It's like a law in economics: demand creates supply, and we can point to the growing number of non-government educational institutions as an example. If the participants of the market
of educational services can be called competitors, then it is possible to analyze the activities of government, non-government general secondary, secondary special, and higher educational institutions. In this case, it is necessary to draw the attention of students by providing substantial and accurate information. In the organization of the educational process, not only the combination of subjects, but also the curriculum, the organization of educational activities, and, as one of the important aspects, issues such as the level of the spiritual and psychological environment of the educational institution are taken into account. The development of internal interaction within PR events and activities helps to form the identity of the educational institution. Therefore, the use of PR technologies in the activities of educational institutions is important, but it can be said that until now, this issue has not been sufficiently studied and implemented in the public education system of our country.

Results

In the organization of each activity, it is necessary to pay attention to specific aspects, to avoid allowing one activity to interfere with another activity. The use of PR activities can be an effective way to ensure the success of the educational services provided by the educational institution, that is, the first task is to achieve the school's brand in the market of the offered educational services.

If we take private educational institutions as an example (it is known that the competitiveness between private educational institutions is significantly strong), one can observe the following actions to strengthen their brand in the market of educational services:

- to meet all requirements for business (financial, material, and intangible resources) in the market of quality educational services;
- to develop and implement new educational projects;
- to strengthen the position in the market of educational services following the consumers’ increased demands for educational services;
- to expand the opportunities to find extra-budgetary funds (O.A. Sukhareva, 2014).

At first, the educational institution must create a brand for itself, that is, it must have its way to achieve the quality and efficiency of the provided educational services. Because the services provided by a brand are not as they are said to be, it may create an "anti-brand" situation, as a result of which public trust is lost (it is difficult to restore). So what does it take for an educational institution to create a worthy brand? The brand technology for creating tangible goods is not so different from creating a brand for an educational institution. It can be said that, even though this process lasts a little longer, the educational institution requires some marketing activities to be completed, in particular:

- To maintain competitive quality educational services (goods) taking into account the demands of the consumers, despite the changing demands of the customers and the educational services offered by the competing educational institutions.
- Creating attributes specific to the educational institution (for example, the name of the institution, logo, unique image, etc.). In addition, it is necessary to create
conditions and organize activities taking into account the relevant aspects and the conveniences for the participants in the active life of the institution, such as the closeness of the institution to the residence, the comfort and hygienic purity of the institution, the friendliness of the staff, the lesson schedule, the originality of the curriculum, as well as the "inter-institutional reputation", the reputation of the school in the area, and the impression of the rating. At the same time, the development of a system of PR activities with the establishment of necessary public relations.

In the next line, we will mention the principles of organizing PR programs in an educational institution. The main formula used in this is RACE (Research, Action, Communications, Evaluation), and we will consider a certain stage of it.

The first stage is the learning stage. Depending on the educational system:

1. Study of regulatory documents, instructions, existing situation, written sources of higher organizations in education management, analysis of educational services market. The reason for the importance of this study today is that the basis of the regulatory framework in the field of educational services is not fully formed, and the field of education is always in need of new reforms.

2. Analysis of the labor market: estimating the current situation. For example, it is important to study the activities of higher education institutions to provide information about specialties to future students. If we analyze, nowadays there are many problems in the system of preparing personnel for the labor market. For example, the lack of personnel in the existing functioning sectors and fields of society, such as education, medicine, production, industry, etc., or the issue of unemployment is still an actual one. Let's take a look at the public education system. How many students graduate from school (11th grade), vocational college, and academic lyceum every year? Most of the graduates expressed their desire to continue their studies in higher education institutions.

Discussion

Education is one of the important factors that develop a community through its social, economic, and spiritual connections. In recent years, the population's choice of educational institutions or educational services has been growing, which is widely observed with the complex processes of choosing a public or private school, an academic lyceum or a vocational college, a school close to the place of residence or a school in another district. Such a situation is observed and occurs for many reasons that affect the operative development of the educational institution. It is also possible to include insufficient information about the activities of the educational institution for the community because the lack of information about the activities of the youth community is one of the factors affecting the development of the institution.

Inadequate provision of information leads to the lack of support of the educational institution in the process of implementation of its activities and goals by the community in the immediate area. As a result, several problems arising in the educational institution with the representatives of the pedagogical staff, employees of the institution, students, their parents, and, in addition, partner organizations will increase, which may lead to the escalation of situations of exerting influence in the neighborhood. An effective method of enticing public attention and learning its opinion is an effective use of PR activities through the work of specialists of institutions in the form of mass media (media) or information services.
Nowadays, PR activity in an educational institution is very important. Public relations (PR) serves to increase the prestige of the educational institution in society, as well as it is a unique event, a process to increase the interest of the surrounding community and other organizations (related to the educational system) in the school and the provision of educational services in it, as well as the movement of the mass media to disseminate information about it. However, nowadays it is rare for general secondary educational institutions to pay attention to PR activities, the process of cooperation with media personnel, and the issue of training specialists in this regard. It can be observed that private general educational institutions are moderately more active in this matter. However, every small fact that happens in the life of an educational institution can be an effective advertisement for improving the image of the school as well as stimulating the process.

The provision of educational services and activities based on mutual competition between secondary schools will affect the quality of education. Therefore, creating a healthy competitive environment based on cooperation between general secondary educational institutions is an important, yet somewhat complex process.

Lately, it seems to us that not much attention has been paid to the activity of providing educational services to the educational institution. That is, the school is not a place that provides educational services; this activity does not seem to be of particular importance. However, the creation of private educational institutions brought the necessity of providing educational services to a higher place, and this activity is explained as their main type of activity. Quality education has always been a essential issue, especially in today’s development period, its importance has increased, after all, perfect and distinctive knowledge provided by primary school education ensures the development of tomorrow’s social spheres.

In the field of education PR is primarily tactics of communication, philosophy, and strategy, priority actions based on collaborative relations between providers and producers of educational services. The efficacy of PR activity is the effective satisfaction of interests in the activity of the educational institution; uniqueness in education; positive opinion of the community concerning the educational process; personal development and material well-being of the employees of the educational institution.

According to the experts’ opinion, it is possible to solve the problems not only in the institution but also in the educational system by accelerating PR services in the life of an educational institution. If we do not direct the creation of the image of the institution by specific goals, it may appear based on public opinion, maybe in its content, and this image may not be what we want. For this reason, an effective factor in the use of PR activities is considered the establishment of public relations with representatives of the general public community thereby achieving the growth in the competitiveness of the institution in the field of providing educational services.

**Conclusion**

At this point, a legitimate question arises as to how much information the students have about the highly mandate professions that are needed in society. The point to think about is whether few young people have graduated from higher education institutions and are unable to find work, or is it, not a dejected situation that today there is a lack of teachers in the school subjects in general secondary schools, especially
in Russian classes of mixed-language schools, and a lack of specialists in school subjects in Russian-language schools?

Therefore, it can be concluded that the activities of information exchange, need study and guidance of future personnel in the personnel training system are not working at the required level.

1. To study the needs and demands of applicants regarding the available educational services, through observation, questionnaire surveys, and conducting experiments.

2. To Analyze the activities of social state organizations run in the field of public education.

3. Cooperative work with the mass media, analysis of reports and interviews of the officials about the activities of the public education system and the processes taking place in the institutions of the system. Also, it is considered to provide information about activities of various PR events, conferences, and analysis of the results of competitive activities between educational institutions through mass media.

References


