

ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Verdika Marlina: Implementasi *Image Management* Dalam Upaya Mempertahankan Eksistensi Restoran Sindang Reret Bandung

Restoran Sindang Reret Bandung merupakan salah satu restoran legendaris khas Sunda yang telah berdiri sejak tahun 1973 dan mampu bertahan lebih dari lima dekade di tengah tingginya risiko kegagalan usaha kuliner. Praktisi Humas Restoran Sindang Reret melaksanakan berbagai strategi *image management* untuk membangun dan memelihara citra restoran sebagai representasi kuliner Sunda yang legendaris.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui proses *image creation*, proses *image maintenance* dan hasil *image management* yang dilakukan Restoran Sindang Reret Bandung dalam upaya mempertahankan eksistensinya.

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan paradigma konstruktivistik dan jenis penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi terhadap tiga informan yang terlibat langsung dalam pengelolaan citra restoran, yaitu *Marketing Communication*, *Corporate Sales Manager*, dan *Captain Service*. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model Spiral Analisis Data dari Creswell, dengan teori *Organizational Image Management* dari Joseph Eric Massey (2016) sebagai kerangka analisis utama.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Restoran Sindang Reret menjalankan dua proses *image management*. Pertama, *image creation* dilakukan melalui pembentukan identitas budaya dan legitimasi sosial. Kedua, *image maintenance* dilakukan melalui empat aspek, yaitu standarisasi internal, perluasan dan adaptasi, penguatan relasi eksternal, serta ketahanan terhadap krisis. Penelitian ini tidak menemukan proses *image restoration*, sebab tantangan yang dihadapi Sindang Reret sepanjang lebih dari lima dekade beroperasi, seperti persaingan bisnis dan pandemi Covid-19, cukup diatasi melalui pemeliharaan citra yang konsisten tanpa merusak legitimasi restoran secara mendasar. Implementasi kedua proses tersebut berkontribusi terhadap eksistensi restoran melalui dua faktor penentu, yaitu konsistensi produk dan citra brand yang menjaga loyalitas pelanggan, serta manfaat nyata dan kedekatan yang dibangun dengan masyarakat sekitar, yang bermuara pada lima dampak nyata: dikenal dan dipercaya masyarakat selama lebih dari 50 tahun, kedekatan emosional dengan masyarakat, posisi sebagai pilihan utama untuk kuliner, acara, pariwisata, dan budaya, keberlanjutan bisnis antargenerasi, serta kontribusi terhadap lingkungan sosial dan ekonomi sekitar.

Kata Kunci: *Image Management; Image Creation; Image Maintenance; Eksistensi Organisasi; Public Relations.*

ABSTRACT

Abstract: Verdika Marlana: Implementation of Image Management in Efforts to Maintain the Existence of Sindang Reret Restaurant Bandung

Sindang Reret Restaurant in Bandung is a legendary Sundanese restaurant that has been operating since 1973 and has survived for more than five decades amid the high risk of failure in the culinary business. Public Relations practitioners at Sindang Reret Restaurant carry out various image management strategies to build and maintain the restaurant's image as a legendary representation of Sundanese cuisine.

This study aims to determine the process of image creation, the process of image maintenance, and the results of image management carried out by Sindang Reret Restaurant Bandung in its efforts to maintain its existence.

This study employed a qualitative approach with a constructivist paradigm and a descriptive qualitative research type. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving three informants directly involved in the restaurant's image management, namely the Marketing Communication, Corporate Sales Manager, and Captain Service. Data analysis was conducted using Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral model, with Joseph Eric Massey's (2016) Organizational Image Management theory serving as the primary analytical framework.

The findings show that Sindang Reret Restaurant implements two image management processes. First, image creation is carried out through the formation of cultural identity and social legitimacy. Second, image maintenance is carried out through four aspects: internal standardization, expansion and adaptation, external relationship strengthening, and resilience to crisis. This study did not find an image restoration process, as the challenges faced by Sindang Reret throughout more than five decades of operation, such as business competition and the Covid-19 pandemic, were sufficiently managed through consistent image maintenance without fundamentally damaging the restaurant's legitimacy. The implementation of both processes contributes to the restaurant's existence through two determining factors, namely product consistency and brand image that maintain customer loyalty, and tangible benefits and closeness built with the surrounding community, which lead to five tangible impacts: being known and trusted by the community for more than 50 years, emotional closeness with the community, positioning as the primary choice for culinary, events, tourism, and culture, cross-generational business continuity, and contribution to the surrounding social and economic environment.

Keywords: Image Management; Image Creation; Image Maintenance; Organizational Existence; Public Relations.