

Public Relations Practices in Local Governments: The Case of Beşiktaş Municipality

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Summary

It is accepted that public relations emerged systematically and professionalized in the United States. It can be said that public relations is fundamentally effective on two separate concepts: its influence on management activities and its influence on communication activities. Considering these two areas of influence, public relations has been attempted to be interpreted with many different definitions. There are many applications and forms of implementation of public relations. Many institutions in various fields successfully manage processes such as image, reputation, and crisis through public relations practices. Local governments are constitutional entities established within the legal system to meet the common and local needs of people living in communities of various sizes within national borders. Local governments are responsible for meeting the expectations of the local population, ensuring the protection of the natural environment, and fulfilling many responsibilities, such as determining the needs of the public and the environment, seeing their reflection in the public, and announcing their actions. In doing so, they conduct public relations activities aimed at identifying the needs of the public and the environment, fulfilling their responsibilities, and making their actions known. They can benefit from many public relations practices in this regard. In this context, public relations in the study, public relations practices, and public relations practices used in local governments have been examined by taking the example of Beşiktaş Municipality's public relations activities.

Introduction

Local governments are legal structures created within the framework of laws to facilitate and expedite the feasibility of activities carried out by states to meet the individual or societal needs of citizens, and

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to facilitate citizens' access to services. The executives of local governments (Mayor, Municipal Council, and Village Headman) are elected by the people living in that local area who have the right to vote. Municipalities generally have an organizational structure consisting of a mayor, municipal council, vice mayors, and directorates. It can be said that municipalities are responsible for providing many services to citizens living locally within the organization, such as infrastructure services, social and cultural services, and cleaning services.

Public relations activities are naturally embedded in the strategic plans and operational plans of municipalities. Municipalities require public relations practices to be able to receive feedback from the public regarding both their announcements and activities while providing services. Considering that public relations practices have their own unique implementation and reporting methods, it is natural for each municipality to benefit from different public relations practices. The management levels of municipalities are determined by the voters living in the same locality. It should also be noted that the cadres running for municipal management are candidates on behalf of a political party. It should be known that the most important factor influencing the voter's preference among candidate cadres is the political party, candidate, and municipal approach. In line with this information, the public relations practices that the incumbent municipal administration will benefit from are largely influenced by the ideology of the political party and the local governance approach for which it was elected. Within this framework, public relations, public relations practices, local governments, and public relations practices in local governments have been examined in general terms through the example of the public relations practices of Beşiktaş Municipality in this study.

Public Relations and Application Areas

In order to better define public relations, it is useful to first explain two fundamental concepts: "public" and "relationship". The term "public" generally refers to the entire population, including rich-middle class, women-men, young-old, educated-uneducated, ethnic, and religious groups (cited from Peltekoğlu, 2007, by Özgür et al., 2013). In other words, the term "public" refers to all the people living in a geographical area. If a country is considered, then the public is the entire population of that country. If it's a region, then it refers to all the people living in that region. And if it's the world, then it refers to the entire world population (Küçük Kurt, 1989). Public relations experts emphasize that the concept of "public" carries a more specific meaning in the context of public relations. Two explanations regarding how the concept of "public" should be understood in terms of public relations are presented: (i) The public is the target audience with whom the organization needs to engage (Peltekoğlu, 2007); (ii) The public consists of individuals, groups, and organizations that are affected by the service policies and practices of an organization, and influence these policies and practices, while having common interests and a sense of unity (Özgür et al., 2013). It is observed within the framework of these explanations that the concept of "public" carries a more specific meaning. To emphasize this, public relations authors in our country also use the terms "public" and "target audience" interchangeably with the term "public".

The second concept that constitutes the term "public relations" is "relationship". The concept of relationship can generally be defined as follows, as stated by Erdoğan (2006): "It is a bond established and conducted with purposeful activities involving at least two parties, temporary or permanent, supported by repetition when necessary, carrying various intensities of emotions, thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs." As this definition indicates, it provides a general explanation of the relationship. However, in the context of public relations, different and more detailed relationship definitions are made. In public relations, the relationship definition by Ledingham and Bruning is widely used. The authors define the relationship concept as "a situation between an organization and its target audience that provides economic, social, political, and/or cultural benefits to all participants and is characterized by mutual positive regard" (Ledingham and Bruning, 1998). Accordingly, the relationship denotes a bond that provides various benefits to both the organization and its relevant public, fostering a positive outlook.

In the relationship between an organization and its target audience, building trust, fostering interest, commitment, and investing time and energy in maintaining the relationship are crucial. The relationship should be communication and expertise-based, goal-oriented, based on mutual interaction, and sustainable.

Public relations is generally accepted as a management and communication method. Being present in almost every field, public relations is seen as one of the most effective factors in determining the path a institution will follow to achieve its management goal and consequently its objectives, as well as shaping the institution's future communication. Besides its consultancy function for management and support for marketing communication, public relations, which can be applied to various fields from politics to civil society organizations, is an independent field of activity and communication discipline associated with neighboring branches when considered together (Peltekoğlu, 2016). While there has not been a consensus on the definition of the concept of public relations for a long time, this situation has also led to its interpretation within the sub-disciplines of social sciences. According to Caywood, public relations is the process of managing all communication activities aimed at creating and maintaining an organization's brand and reputation, as well as integrating its new and continuous relationships with stakeholders profitably (cited by Geçikli, 2008). Public relations practitioners communicate with all relevant internal and external publics to develop positive relationships and create harmony between organizational goals and social expectations. They develop, implement, and evaluate organizational programs that promote the exchange of influence and understanding among all units of an organization and its publics. Taking into account such differences in meaning and perspectives, public relations can generally be defined as a set of activities aimed at managing an organization's image, reputation, crisis processes, internal and external communications, and creating loyalty, trust, and positive impressions towards the organization. In these definitions, a common framework is established based on designed, planned, performance-based, public-serving, two-way communication-based, and management-functional operation. "Public relations is a distinctive management function that helps establish and maintain mutual communication, acceptance, and cooperation between an organization and the public; it includes problem and issue management; it helps management to be informed and respond to the public; it defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; it serves management in learning new developments and effectively facilitating change by serving as an early warning system for predicting trends; and it uses reliable and ethical communication techniques and research as fundamental tools" (Özgür et al., 2013).

Public relations has many application areas and implementation methods. Many institutions in various fields successfully manage processes such as image, reputation, and crisis through public relations practices. The function of public relations is expanding increasingly in today's world. Consequently, many application areas of public relations are emerging. Public relations has fundamental tasks such as research, consultancy for senior management, early warning, and communication. In addition to these, there are also important areas of professional-level practice today. Some of these application areas include media relations, publicity, financial relations, public affairs, issue management, lobbying, crisis management, reputation management, marketing communication, sponsorship, corporate social responsibility, event management, corporate identity and image, employee/member relations, and community relations (Sönmez, 2022; Peltekoğlu, 2016; Geçikli, 2008).

Media Relations: Media relations is one of the oldest application areas of public relations. Therefore, in earlier periods, public relations was primarily evaluated as efforts to establish and develop good relations with the media. Organizations heavily rely on the media to convey information about themselves to the public, create a positive image, and understand what their relevant circles think. Additionally, the media needs information and news to sustain its existence. This mutual need is crucial for developing good relations between both the media and public relations. For a news story or information about the organization to be featured in the media, attention should be paid to factors such as the story being interesting, relevant to viewers, carrying novelty, the timing of publication, delivering it to the media through appropriate means (mail, email, fax, etc.), and delivering it on time. Examples

of activities in the field of media relations include organizing press conferences, writing press releases, arranging trips for media personnel, etc., undertaken by public relations officers.

Announcement: Announcement refers to the free publication of news or information related to an organization in print or visual media. Public relations experts systematically send messages about the organization to the media in a planned, credible, and reliable manner. These messages are featured in the media to the extent that they have news value. Additionally, for the news to be effective, it should be prepared in a attention-grabbing and interesting manner. Commonly used announcement techniques include press releases, press conferences, speeches, and special reports.

Financial Relations: Financial relations, also known as investor relations, aim to inform groups related to the organization's financial situation through various announcement techniques as quickly as possible. Examples of areas of work in financial relations include preparing communication strategies aligned with management's objectives, communicating with the press, managing relationships with financial communities, including analyst meetings, tours, and visits.

Public Affairs: Public affairs is an important application area of public relations. Some public and private sector organizations refer to various public relations activities they undertake as public affairs. Examples of tasks in the public affairs domain include conducting corporate citizenship activities, facilitating political education for employees, establishing voluntary services from executives, and actively participating in community development.

Issue Management: Another application area of public relations is issue management. Issue management is evaluated under two headings: proactive and reactive. Proactive issue management involves managing the issue before it occurs and taking preventive measures as if a problem could arise. Reactive issue management involves corrective activities carried out after problems arise during issue management.

Lobbying: Lobbying is one of the increasingly important public relations practices. In recent years, public relations-based lobbying efforts have begun to gain importance. Efforts to influence decisions in favor of the interests of the masses represented by institutions and organizations can be seen as public relations-based lobbying.

Crisis Management: Crisis can be defined as unforeseen situations that occur unexpectedly and often result in damaging consequences. Crisis management is a process that needs to be handled correctly before, during, and after a crisis. Public relations units play an active role in crisis management processes, such as developing good relationships with target audiences and the media and continuously informing the public.

Reputation Management: Reputation refers to the belief, trust, and respect that develop over time for an individual or institution. Corporate reputation management is one of the important application areas of public relations. It is expected that the importance of reputation management will increase in the coming years, and public relations units will take on a more active role in this regard.

Marketing Communication: Another application area of public relations is marketing communication. When public relations is used to directly support the marketing objectives of an organization, it is referred to as marketing communication. However, there are significant benefits for organizations in combining advertising, public relations, and marketing.

Sponsorship: Sponsorship is one of the increasingly important application areas today. Examples of sponsorship practices include supporting a television series, contributing to organizing a concert, supporting the revival of a forgotten craft, or covering some expenses of a football team. Public relations officers play active roles in the preparation of sponsorship projects, evaluation of projects, and implementation of sponsorship-related activities.

Corporate Social Responsibility: Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is one of the significant areas of work for public relations. Considering the interests of the relevant target audience and avoiding behaviors that could harm them in the decisions and actions taken by organizations constitute the essence of social responsibility. Merely pursuing profit-oriented activities by organizations is no longer deemed sufficient. They should also undertake activities for the benefit of society, even without profit motives and sometimes by allocating their own resources. Nowadays, organizations attach great importance to CSR activities because they aim to create a positive image of themselves through these activities.

Event Management: Event management provides significant opportunities for an organization for its employees to interact and form impressions with relevant stakeholders. Public relations officers plan and execute all stages of an event. Tasks within event management include determining the venue, preparing invitations, organizing refreshments, selecting and training staff, distributing gifts to participants, and managing media relations.

Corporate Identity and Image: While corporate identity can be defined as the characteristics that distinguish an organization from others, corporate image determines whether a company is approved by its target audience or other organizations or individuals in its environment. In its practices related to this area, public relations works to establish, develop, and evaluate the identities and desired images of organizations.

Employee/Member Relations: This area of public relations encompasses practices directed towards employees or members of an organization. Employee/member relations involve activities aimed at fostering team spirit, reducing problems among employees/members, fostering a sense of belonging, and facilitating information flow. This aspect also forms the backbone of internal communication within the organization.

Community Relations: Lastly, community relations can be considered as another application area of public relations. The aim here is to facilitate communication between the organization and the community in which it operates. By actively participating in issues important to society, such as education, environment, unemployment, and health, organizations can contribute to raising the welfare of the community and fostering a sense of social responsibility.

Local Governments and Public Relations Practices

Local governments can be described as the closest public administration and service units to the people living in any locality within the boundaries of a state. The functions of local governments can vary between states or regimes. However, when discussing local governments, the concepts of state and central government should also be considered. The state is an organizational form that people resort to in social life and is a political organization (Güneş, 1996). The primary purpose of the state is to meet the common needs of people living within national borders. The main features that distinguish the state from other institutions in achieving this purpose are its being the most extensive form of organization, the realization of its activities as a result of advanced division of labor, and having the power to do all these.

The place of local governments within the concept of the state can vary depending on the differences in the narrow and broad definitions of the state. In the narrow sense, the state encompasses only public legal entities of a central and political nature. Local governments do not fall within this scope. In the broad sense, the state includes the entirety of organized public power or all public legal entities. Local governments can be considered within this scope. General political theorists have also brought various approaches and definitions such as an intermediary service organization between the central state and local people, a subordinate central management unit, and a self-governing autonomous community throughout the history of local governance. Therefore, a significant portion of the studies related to local

governments has been attempts to apply "state" theories to "local government units" rather than creating a systematic theory (Güneş, 1996). Central management can be said to be a form of governance in which the control of resources and allocations is within the fundamental dynamics of state power and is distributed to subunits. However, rather than making a distinction between the two forms of governance, it is generally accepted that benefiting from both forms of governance is correct.

In general, local governments are defined as constitutional institutions established within the legal order to meet the common and local needs of people living in communities of various sizes within national borders. Local governments are also a part of national politics where the total of local voters influences general politics. In other words, considering that the majority of political activities are shaped within the framework of power supported by the will and votes of voters gathered from various localities, it can be said that national politics is largely shaped through local politics (Önder, Sipahi, and Yaman, 2021). A democratic and autonomous level of governance formed to meet the needs of local groups outside the service network of the central government and whose decision-making bodies are directly elected by the public (Tunç, 2016).

There are three types of local government in Turkey: Provincial Special Administrations, Villages (neighborhoods), Municipalities (Tunç, 2016):

Provincial Special Administration: These are local structures with their own budget and decision-making bodies, serving locally in provinces that are not metropolitan cities. The Governor is the executive organ at the head of provincial special administrations.

Neighborhoods and Villages: Neighborhoods and villages can be referred to as small structures that constitute cities and towns. The governing bodies of neighborhoods are the muhtar (neighborhood head) and the council of elders, who serve with the will of the neighborhood through democratic elections.

Municipalities: Municipalities are small local governments formed by election. The complete definition of a municipality in the dictionary of public administration is as follows: "A local government unit with legal personality, elected decision-making bodies, responsible for meeting the common needs of residents living in urban settlements" (Tunç, 2016). In the Municipalities Law, municipalities are defined as "entities with administrative and financial characteristics, elected by voters to meet the local common needs of the town and its residents" (Tunç, 2016).

In our country, according to the 2022 data of the Ministry of Interior, there are 5 types of municipalities: Metropolitan Municipality (30), Provincial Municipality (51), Metropolitan District Municipality (519), District Municipality (403), and Town Municipality (388). The duties of municipalities in Turkey can generally be listed as follows:

- a) Urban planning, water, and sewage works
- b) Environmental protection and public health
- c) Afforestation, creating and preserving parks and green areas
- d) Urban traffic regulations
- e) Municipal police, fire department, ambulance, and emergency rescue services
- f) Burial and cemetery services
- g) Building housing, construction, maintenance, and repair of government-owned school buildings, Marriage services
- h) Supporting tourism and cultural art activities, promotion, preserving cultural and historical structures
- i) Youth and sports affairs
- j) Aid for the poor and social services
- k) Acquisition of vocational skills
- l) Development of economic and commercial activities

Municipalities carry out public relations activities in order to announce their activities, public resources, management rules and objectives, services, etc., and to receive feedback from the local population. The objectives of public relations practices in municipalities can be listed as follows (Türkal, 2022):

- a) Ensuring mutual understanding and goodwill between the municipality and the local community, in other words, gaining the trust of the people. Municipalities cannot be successful if they fail to convince the local community that their actions and decisions are correct.
- b) Enlightening the local community and instilling in them the significance of the municipality's work; keeping the local community informed of its policies.
- c) Encouraging positive behavior from the local community towards the municipal administration.
- d) Facilitating interactions between the public and the municipality. Information on how to apply to the relevant municipal service units, what information and documents are required, any applicable timeframes, and other relevant details should be clearly written in understandable language at visible entry points of these units, attracting the attention of the local community.
- e) Obtaining information from the local community to enhance the appropriateness of decisions made by the municipal council, executive committee, and mayor. Providing the local community with the opportunity to express their opinions on matters to be decided by the municipal decision-making bodies before decisions are made.
- f) Providing informative information to the public about decisions made by the municipal authorities and compliance with legislation to ensure adherence to them.
- g) Facilitating cooperation and consensus with the local community to ensure their contribution to the quicker and easier provision of services.
- h) Utilizing the wishes, desires, suggestions, recommendations, and complaints of the local community in the planning, programming, and other arrangements of work, and evaluating them in all activities aimed at resolving any shortcomings.
- i) Instilling pride in being part of the local community.

The desire to return to office also requires efforts by the municipal administration to position itself as a preferred choice among the electorate, who are also fellow citizens (Yayınoğlu, 2007).

While conducting public relations activities in municipalities, it is important not to forget the public institutionalism and that the target audience is the community, not customers. At this point, there are certain principles in public relations practices in municipal activities that need to be considered to protect both public sensitivity and professional ethics. These are; the principle of integrity, the principle of participation, the principle of effective, efficient, and adequate service, the principle of consistency, the principle of continuity, personal competence and institutional support, the principle of impartial and equal service, the principle of openness and transparency, the principle of identity, the principles of relationships, communication, and the reciprocity of interaction, and the principle of honesty (Özipek, 2013).

Considering Public Relations Practices in the Example of Beşiktaş Municipality

"The historical roots of Beşiktaş extend back to ancient times. It was known by the name "Kune Petro," meaning "Stone Cradle," in those days. It is said that Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha erected five poles on this shore to moor his ships, hence the name BEŞ-TAŞ (Five Stones), which over time evolved into BEŞİK-TAŞ. During the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the region expanded further, and in the subsequent years, it became known as a place where slave markets were established and where soldiers and commercial caravans from Rumelia gathered and rested on their way to Anatolia. With the construction of the Çırağan Palace (1871), Dolmabahçe Palace (1856), Yıldız Palace (1898), as well as mansions and pavilions, it became the administrative center of the Ottoman Empire. The fact that the Great Leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his mother Zübeyde Hanım resided in the house numbered 76 on Akaretler, Spor Street, and the passing of the Great Leader in Dolmabahçe Palace have given

Beşiktaş a unique place in the history of the Republic." (Republic of Turkey, Beşiktaş District Governorship, 2023).

"The district of Beşiktaş became a separate district from Beyoğlu district with Law No. 1612, published in the Official Gazette dated 21.05.1930 and numbered 1499. It does not have a township or village. It has a total of 23 neighborhoods, and its settlement completely bears the character of an urbanized area."

"Beşiktaş, one of the central districts of Istanbul, which is the center of history and culture in the world, has been a place where various types of structures coexist due to being a neighborhood where both members of the dynasty and high-ranking state officials as well as ordinary people lived during the Ottoman period. This diversity has added a unique beauty to the Beşiktaş district."

"Our district has rich museums such as Dolmabahçe Palace, Çırağan Palace, Yıldız Palace, Painting and Sculpture Museum, and Naval Museum, as well as modern cultural centers and art galleries."

"Throughout its history, Beşiktaş has produced many famous figures in the fields of education and culture; some of these names include Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha, Süleyman Pasha, Nedim, Abdülhak Hamid Tarhan, Mehmet Bin Durmuş (Gazali), Tuzcu Baba, Baltacı Mehmet Pasha, Ahmet Vefik Pasha, Fevzi Çakmak, Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel, Refik Erduran, Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar, Orhan Veli Kanık, and Behçet Necatigil."

"The population of Beşiktaş district according to the 2018 Address Based Population Registration System (ADNKS) records is 181,074. The population of Beşiktaş district, which was 190,032 in 2015 and 189,536 in 2016, decreased to 185,447 in 2017 and to 181,074 in 2018. It is observed that the district's population decreased by approximately 9,000 people in three years. Beşiktaş district is a dynamically populated district that constantly receives migration due to its location, whose population increases with new births, decreases with deaths and migration, and whose population density changes with movements in housing stock and rental prices. There is intense circulation in the district. Even in situations where there is no population change, it is observed that approximately 10,000 urban residents relocate, and new ones come in, and population movements such as births, deaths, and migration occur."

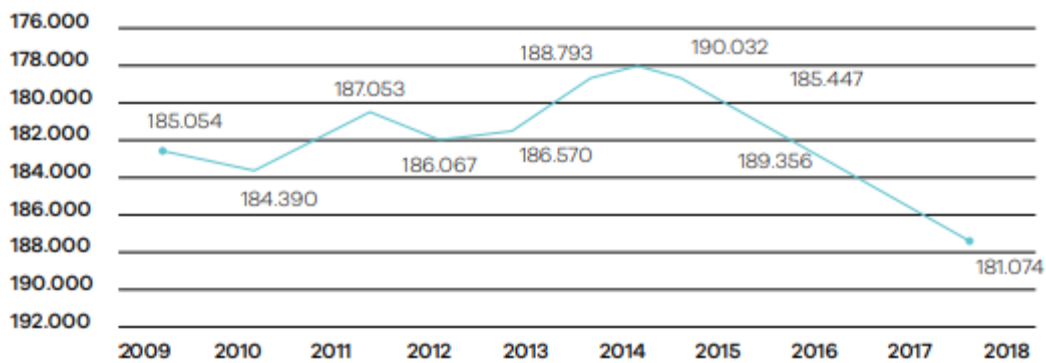


Image 1. The Population Change of Beşiktaş Between the Years 2009-2018

Source: Beşiktaş District Governorship.

The main reasons for the decrease in population despite the increasing trend since 2012 are internal migration within Istanbul, migration to other provinces, emigration abroad, the difference in death and birth rates, a decrease in the number of residential units, an increase in the number of workplaces, and population movements of foreign nationals residing in the district. The most significant population increase in the district over the past 10 years was observed from 2010 to 2011, with an increase of 2,663 people. However, considering the declining trends, it is noteworthy that the district lost 3,909 people in 2017 and 4,373 people in 2018 (Strategic Plan, 2020-2024).

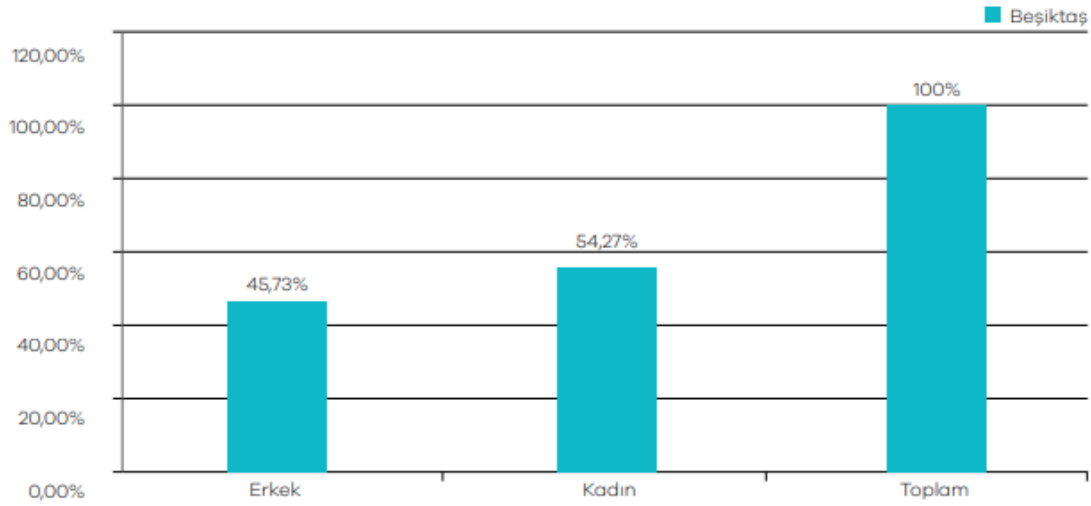


Image 2. The Distribution of Beşiktaş District's Population by Gender

Source: Strategic Plan, 2020-2024.

Table 1. The Distribution of Beşiktaş District's Population by Age Group (2018)

Age Group	Man	Woman	Total
Age 0-4	3844	3617	7461
Age 5-14	7962	7671	15633
Age 15-39	32310	35940	68250
Age 40-64	27935	34441	62376
Age 65 +	10759	16595	27354
Total	82810	98264	181074

Source: Strategic Plan, 2020-2024.

Table 2. The Distribution of Beşiktaş District's Population by Education Level (%) (2018)

Education Status	Man	Woman	Total
Illiterate	0,08	0,59	0,67
Literate but Not Finishing School	2,08	2,51	4,58
Primary School Graduate	4,98	6,83	11,81
Primary Education Graduate	1,60	1,13	2,73
Middle School Graduate	3,84	4,21	8,05
High School Graduate	10,83	13,47	13,47
High School and Faculty Graduate	16,01	19,03	35,04
High School Graduate Undergraduate and Above	5,58	5,77	11,36
Unknown	0,67	0,79	1,46
Total	45,67	54,33	100,00

Source: Strategic Plan, 2020-2024.

Considering its location, social dynamics, and the predominant social and political inclinations of its population, Beşiktaş district is among the areas in Istanbul where modern lifestyle prevails. Beşiktaş can be described as having an above-average level of education and economic status, resulting in a district where quality products and services are abundant. With its cultural, artistic, entertainment, and sports venues, as well as parks, green spaces, concert areas, and its coastal line due to its geographical location, Beşiktaş presents itself as a city with ample opportunities.

Moreover, Beşiktaş is a district where various religious groups coexist. Practitioners of almost every faith can be found here. Given the general structure of the country, it is natural that Beşiktaş, with its predominantly Muslim population, also accommodates Jewish and Christian communities, providing them with centers of worship and religious facilities.

Beşiktaş Gymnastics Club (BJK), one of Turkey's oldest sports clubs, is also located in the Beşiktaş district.

When all these factors are considered together, public institutions in Beşiktaş are faced with serving the local population and dealing with a high rate of visitors. In terms of public representation, the center of services lies with the District Governorship and Municipal services.

As an example, relevant to the subject of the study, the local unit of Beşiktaş has gained district status separate from Beyoğlu. Therefore, this situation has paved the way for Beşiktaş to have its own district municipality.

Beşiktaş Municipality, like other municipalities in Turkey, has an organizational structure in accordance with Law No. 5393 on Municipalities, serving local residents and visitors, and overseeing the fulfillment of citizens' obligations. Beşiktaş Municipality operates within this organizational structure.

- a) Licensing and Inspection Affairs
- b) Advanced Support Services
- c) Sanitation Services
- d) Health Services
- e) Municipal Police Affairs
- f) Veterinary Affairs
- g) Culture and Social Affairs
- h) Real Estate Acquisition Affairs
- i) Climate Change and Zero Waste Affairs
- j) Park and Garden Affairs
- k) Public Works
- l) Urban Planning and Development Affairs
- m) Human Resources Affairs
- n) Financial Services
- o) External Relations Affairs
- p) Social Assistance Affairs
- q) Information Technology Affairs
- r) Press, Publishing, and Public Relations Affairs
- s) Sports Affairs
- t) Women and Family Services Affairs

Some of these activities are carried out as public service, while others are performed as a public duty. The current administration of Beşiktaş Municipality, like all other municipal administrations, carries out various activities in addition to fixed municipal services in line with its political orientation and its own understanding of local governance. The activities carried out can be grouped under four main headings (Beşiktaş Municipality Website, 2022): Health Services (Under Beşiktaş Municipality health services; family counseling service, ambulance service, all health services, home care and examination service, and funeral services are conducted), Education Services (Summer schools and lifelong learning courses are at the center of Beşiktaş Municipality's education services), Social Services (Social services carried out in Beşiktaş Municipality include; soup kitchen, helping hands taxi, barrier-free Beşiktaş, well-being service, public market, public store, neighborhood card, social service, free shuttle services, free wi-fi), Cultural Services (Under the title of cultural services of Beşiktaş Municipality; Beşiktaş culture and art, B+ magazine, libraries, cafes are listed).

Among the many activities of Beşiktaş Municipality, the most noticeable one in recent times seems to be the "ÖĞRENCİ'YE" application. The application has been implemented through the collaboration of Beşiktaş Municipality, Tourism-Restaurant Investors, and Gastronomy Enterprises Association. Students in Beşiktaş can browse the menus of registered restaurants online and go to the place of their choice. Since it is a project based on voluntariness, there are no restrictions for the merchants who will participate in the application (Kaba, 2022). The application appears to be a three-component structure consisting of Beşiktaş Municipality, merchants, and students. Here, it is observed that the student has the opportunity to meet his/her nutritional needs free of charge in an environment of increasing inflation. While the merchant has the opportunity to introduce himself/herself with a social responsibility project, at the same time, he/she also has the opportunity to increase his/her profitability thanks to the positive image based on social sensitivity created concurrently.

The application has primarily been promoted using an announcement-based method. In this regard, printed announcement tools such as banners, posters, leaflets, as well as municipality-owned vehicles equipped with sound systems have been heavily utilized throughout the district. The visuals used on the municipality's official website are also noteworthy. In addition to this, its coverage in newspaper and television news has increased its visibility both locally and nationally. Besides all these, the most effective announcement platform is social media, which is a new media channel. The most significant feature of announcement-based communication activities is their low cost. With this feature, it not only saves public resources but also increases the preference rate, especially for local administrations. Access to the application is easily available on all smart devices with Android or iOS software.

Conclusion

Public relations activities, which are among the important elements of corporate life, ensure the establishment of accurate and effective communication between an organization and its internal and external target audience. The correct implementation of public relations activities requires adherence to principles such as honesty, transparency, and being planned. Public relations activities should not only be considered for communication purposes. Public relations is also a management activity. It is believed that corporate governance based on public relations will yield the desired results.

Local governments, while being the closest public service and management area to the public, are also political structures. Besides facilitating communication and management between the state and the public, they are also one of the fundamental elements of democracy. The management of municipalities is shaped according to the political preferences of the local voters. The political affiliations and ideological orientations of the resulting municipal management cadres determine how local service and communication channels will be used. In this regard, how public relations activities will be implemented locally is also shaped by the perspective of the management.

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