



Increasing Parental Participation Trough Marketing Strategi in Early Childhood Education

Moh. Agus Sifa¹✉, Nurul Novitasari²

¹ Department of Islamic Economics, University of Al-Hikmah Indonesia, Indonesia

² Department of Islamic Early Childhood Education, University of Al-Hikmah Indonesia, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received November 15, 2025

Revised December 15, 2025

Accepted December 25, 2025

Available online December 31, 2025

Keywords:

Parental Participation, Marketing Strategy, Early Childhood Education.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

Copyright © 2025 by Author.
Published by University of Al-Hikmah Indonesia.

ABSTRACT

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) plays a strategic role in shaping children's early development, with parental involvement serving as a critical determinant of program effectiveness. This study examines the marketing strategies employed by TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban to enhance parental participation in early childhood education. The findings indicate that clear market segmentation, positioning based on Islamic values, and consistent communication through digital platforms contribute positively to parental engagement in school activities. Despite these strengths, parental participation remains constrained by time limitations and persistent perceptions of parents as passive recipients rather than active educational partners. This study highlights the importance of developing flexible and interactive partnership models supported by digital communication to foster sustainable parental involvement. The findings offer practical insights for PAUD institutions seeking to strengthen parent-school partnerships through strategic marketing approaches.

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a strategic foundation for fostering children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. At this stage, parental involvement is a key factor because it directly impacts the quality of educational services and the success of children's growth and development. In Indonesia, PAUD institutions function not only as educational service providers but also as a partnership between schools and families, making active parental participation an integral element in PAUD implementation (Nursalam, 2021).

Nevertheless, various studies show that many PAUD institutions still face challenges in optimizing parental participation. Factors such as time constraints, differing levels of parental understanding of the importance of PAUD, socioeconomic conditions, and weak school-parent communication patterns often act as obstacles. Furthermore, increasing competition among PAUD institutions requires managers to develop marketing strategies that focus not only on student recruitment but also on strengthening long-term relationships with parents (Ahmad & H., 2022).

In addition to conventional promotional approaches, recent studies emphasize the strategic role of media teams in managing digital communication and institutional branding in early childhood education settings. (Ana Aulia, Nur Lailatul Fitri, Nurul Novitasari, 2023) highlights that well-coordinated media teams contribute not only to increasing institutional visibility but also to strengthening trust and engagement among parents. This finding suggests that marketing strategies in PAUD should be viewed as relational and participatory processes rather than merely promotional activities.

Most previous research has focused on PAUD marketing strategies from the perspective of promotion and increasing student enrollment. There are still limited studies specifically examining marketing strategies as an instrument for increasing parental participation, particularly in early childhood education institutions affiliated with religious communities. This gap is the primary focus of this research.

This study examines the marketing strategies implemented at TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban, an early childhood education institution based on the Muslimat NU community. This institution integrates religious, social, and family values into its marketing strategy to build stronger partnerships with parents. The novelty of this research lies in the analysis of early childhood education strategies that are not solely oriented toward commercial aspects, but rather directed toward encouraging parental involvement through educational programs, collaborative activities, and ongoing communication.

Therefore, this research is expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to early childhood education administrators in formulating more participatory marketing strategies. This approach is not only relevant for increasing the institution's competitiveness but is also crucial for building an early childhood education ecosystem that is collaborative, sustainable, and oriented toward the best interests of children.

METHODS

This research uses a case study approach with a qualitative descriptive design to gain an in-depth understanding of the marketing strategies of early childhood education institutions (PAUD) in increasing parental participation at the Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Kindergarten in Tuban. This approach was chosen because it comprehensively describes the context, processes, and social dynamics occurring within the early childhood education institution.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews with the principal, teachers, and parents; direct observation of school activities involving parents; and documentation in the form of institutional promotional materials (brochures, social media) and parent attendance records. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to provide flexibility in exploring the perceptions, experiences, and strategies implemented by each informant in greater depth.

Informants were selected purposively, considering their relevance and involvement in the institution's activities. The principal was chosen because of his role as a strategic policymaker, teachers as implementers of marketing programs and school activities, and parents were selected based on their level of participation—both active and less active—to obtain a more representative range of perspectives. The total number of respondents consisted of one principal, three teachers, and ten parents. The research location was Al Hikmah

Muslimat NU Kindergarten, Tuban, Tuban Regency, East Java, with data collection taking place during the even semester of the 2024–2025 academic year.

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, following a qualitative analysis model. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation (principal, teachers, and parents) and technical triangulation (interviews, observation, and documentation). Furthermore, research findings were compared with previous literature on early childhood education (PAUD) marketing strategies and parent participation to strengthen the interpretation and relevance of the research results.

RESULT

Marketing Strategy at TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban

Field data indicate that TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban implements a set of integrated marketing strategies aimed at strengthening institutional visibility and encouraging parental engagement.

Market Segmentation and Targeting

The school targets parents of children aged 4–6 years, particularly those who are active members of the Muslimat NU community and families in Tuban seeking Islamic-based early childhood education. The affiliation with Muslimat NU functions as a key distinguishing characteristic that differentiates the institution from other PAUD providers in the area.

Positioning of Educational Services

TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban positions itself as an early childhood education institution grounded in Islamic values while promoting active parental partnership. Institutional messages emphasize that the school is not merely a kindergarten, but a collaborative educational community for Muslim families, where parents are encouraged to participate in their children's educational processes.

Promotion and Communication Practices

Promotional activities are conducted through both offline and online channels. Offline media include brochures and flyers presenting the school's vision and mission, flagship programs, parent testimonials, and visual documentation of children's and parents' activities. Online promotion is carried out through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, which regularly share classroom activities and invite parental interaction.

In addition, the school organizes open houses and demonstration classes, allowing parents to observe learning activities, interact with teachers, and engage with other parents. Communication is further supported through structured parent–school partnership activities, including parenting workshops, routine parent–teacher meetings, and dedicated WhatsApp groups that facilitate updates on children's progress and invitations to school activities.

Focus on Service Quality and Physical Evidence

The institution emphasizes service quality as part of its marketing approach. This includes maintaining competent teaching staff, child-friendly learning spaces, and a supportive school atmosphere reflecting the values of the Muslimat NU community. Parents are also invited to participate in classroom tours and to provide testimonials, which serve as tangible representations of service quality and help build trust among prospective and existing parents.

Parent Participation at TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban

Data from observations and interviews show that parental participation manifests in several forms. Attendance at parent-teacher meetings and open house activities is relatively high, with approximately 70% of invited parents participating. Involvement in school activities such as community service programs, outings, and parenting workshops is evident, although the level of participation varies; some parents are consistently active, while others tend to participate passively.

At the home level, many parents report supporting their children's learning by providing study spaces, discussing school activities with their children, and maintaining communication with teachers through WhatsApp groups. However, parental participation in formal school decision-making processes, such as program planning and evaluation, remains limited. Several parents indicated that they tend to wait for formal invitations from the school rather than initiating involvement independently.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Supporting factors identified include the strong Muslimat NU identity that fosters a sense of belonging, relatively effective communication between the school and parents, and the relevance of parenting programs to parents' needs. In contrast, inhibiting factors include parents' work-related time constraints, distance or access to the school, limited understanding of the importance of active involvement, and the perception among some parents that their role is primarily that of service recipients rather than educational partners.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the marketing strategy implemented by TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban has been relatively effective in enhancing parental participation in early childhood education. The effectiveness of this strategy is reflected not only in parents' attendance at school activities but also in the establishment of sustained communication and emotional attachment between parents and the institution. Nevertheless, the results also reveal structural and perceptual challenges that limit the depth of parental involvement, indicating areas for further development.

One of the key strengths identified is the institution's clear market segmentation. By targeting parents of children aged 4-6 years who are closely connected to the Muslimat NU community, TK Al Hikmah successfully leverages shared religious and social identities. This finding is consistent with Ahmad and H. (2022), who argue that community-based segmentation enhances parental trust and emotional engagement. However, unlike more

commercially oriented PAUD institutions that rely primarily on price and facilities as marketing appeals, TK Al Hikmah demonstrates that social and ideological alignment can function as a powerful non-material marketing asset.

The school's strong institutional positioning as an Islamic-values-based PAUD that promotes parent-school partnership further reinforces parental engagement. This aligns with Suyadi (2020), who emphasizes that faith-based educational institutions tend to foster closer relational bonds with parents. In contrast to studies that suggest religious branding may sometimes limit inclusivity, this research shows that, within a homogeneous community context such as Tuban, religious identity can instead serve as a unifying factor that strengthens participation rather than constraining it.

Transparent and active communication through social media platforms and WhatsApp groups also emerged as a significant contributor to parental participation. These channels enable real-time information sharing, reduce communication barriers, and provide parents with a sense of continuous involvement in their children's learning processes. While Widiastuti (2021) highlights digital communication as an effective engagement tool, the present study adds nuance by revealing that digital strategies alone are insufficient for parents with limited technological literacy or access. This finding contrasts with studies that assume universal digital readiness among parents and underscores the importance of context-sensitive communication strategies.

Despite these strengths, the study reveals persistent challenges. Limited parental time remains a major constraint, consistent with broader findings in early childhood education research. More critically, some parents continue to perceive their role as passive service recipients rather than active educational partners. This aligns with previous studies showing that parental participation often declines at the stages of program evaluation and decision-making. However, the present study contributes a more detailed explanation by linking this perception to the absence of structured opportunities for parental co-decision-making, rather than merely to parents' lack of motivation.

The findings also highlight important development opportunities. Flexible participation models, such as hybrid online-offline activities, have the potential to address time constraints more effectively than conventional face-to-face programs. Furthermore, creating formal mechanisms for parental involvement in planning and evaluation—such as parent advisory groups or co-creation forums—could shift parental perceptions from consumers to partners. This approach contrasts with traditional PAUD management models that centralize decision-making within the institution.

The unique contribution of this study lies in its integration of marketing strategy analysis with parental participation in a faith-based PAUD context. Unlike prior research that treats marketing primarily as a recruitment tool, this study demonstrates that marketing strategies can function as relational mechanisms that shape long-term parental engagement. By situating marketing within a partnership-oriented framework, the study offers a conceptual alternative for PAUD institutions seeking sustainable participation beyond enrollment numbers.

In summary, while the marketing strategy at TK Al Hikmah Muslimat NU Tuban has proven effective in fostering initial and ongoing parental involvement, its long-term impact

depends on the institution's ability to deepen participatory structures and address contextual barriers. These findings provide both theoretical enrichment and practical implications for the development of participatory, community-based PAUD management models.

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the strategic role of marketing in early childhood education institutions as a mechanism not only for attracting enrollment but also for fostering sustainable parental engagement. The findings demonstrate that marketing strategies grounded in clear segmentation, coherent institutional positioning, and open communication can strengthen relational ties between schools and parents, thereby supporting a more participatory educational environment.

From a practical and policy perspective, the results suggest that PAUD management and stakeholders should view marketing as part of a broader governance and partnership framework. Institutional policies that promote flexible participation models, inclusive communication systems, and formal avenues for parental involvement in planning and evaluation can enhance the effectiveness of parent-school partnerships. Such approaches are particularly relevant for community- and faith-based PAUD institutions, which possess strong social capital that can be mobilized to support collaborative education models.

This study also highlights the need for institutional innovation to address persistent structural constraints, such as time limitations and unequal access to digital communication. Integrating hybrid engagement strategies and parental capacity-building programs may help transform parents' roles from passive service recipients into active educational partners.

Future research is encouraged to expand this line of inquiry by employing comparative or multi-site designs to examine the applicability of these findings across different institutional, cultural, and socio-economic contexts. Quantitative or mixed-method approaches could also be used to measure the long-term impact of participatory marketing strategies on child development outcomes and institutional sustainability. By extending the analytical scope, subsequent studies may further contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and practices in early childhood education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ana Aulia, Nur Lailatul Fitri, Nurul Novitasari, F. M. (2023). *Strategi tim media dalam upaya promosi lembaga paud*. 4(1), 38–46.
- Faizin, I. (2017). Efektivitas strategi dan bauran pemasaran (product, promotion, price) dalam meningkatkan citra sekolah dan loyalitas orang tua siswa PAUD: Studi kasus di Kota Semarang. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Early Childhood Education*, 2(1), 45–58.
- Hidayat, I., & Eka, R. (2021). Strategi pemasaran PAUD berbasis komunitas. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 12(2), 45–55.
- Kurniawan, S., & Purnama, D. (2021). Partisipasi orang tua dalam pendidikan anak usia dini di Kota Malang. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(1), 56–63.
- Lauricella, A., Lim, M., & Able-Boone, H. (2020). Competitiveness in early childhood education institutions: Implications for marketing strategy. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 48(4), 423–435.

- Macrides, E., Zuckerman, B., & McClelland, M. (2022). Early childhood educational stimulation and marketing of services: A global perspective. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 54(2), 217–231.
- Munastiwi, E. (2018). Analisis strategi manajemen pemasaran PAUD. *Jurnal PIAUD*, 11(4), 101–115.
- Nursalim, A. (2021). Pendidikan anak usia dini dan peran orang tua dalam pembentukan karakter anak. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 12(1), 22–31.
- Permata Bening, T., & Munastiwi, E. (2022). Implementasi strategi pemasaran lembaga dalam meningkatkan jumlah peserta didik di PAUD berbasis pesantren. *Indonesian Journal of Early Childhood: Jurnal Dunia Anak Usia Dini*, 4(2), 89–98.
- Putra, D. (2021). Pengaruh faktor sosial dan ekonomi terhadap partisipasi orang tua di PAUD. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 15(4), 34–42.
- Romli, D., Tunggal, S., & Budi, P. (2020). Pemasaran jasa pendidikan dalam era digital: Studi pada lembaga PAUD dan TK di Indonesia. *Jurnal Pemasaran dan Teknologi Pendidikan*, 3(2), 65–77.
- Sifa, M. A., Putro, H. K., & Mun'im, M. (2025). Strategi manajemen sumber daya manusia berbasis syariah untuk meningkatkan kinerja karyawan di lembaga keuangan syariah dalam perspektif Al-Qur'an. *Journal of Islamic Banking*, 6(1), 1–19.
- Sulistyorini. (2023). Marketing management of educational services in early childhood education: A study of PAUD institutions in Tulungagung Regency. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 7(2), 1312–1319. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i2.4093>
- Suyadi. (2020). Strategi pemasaran dalam pendidikan PAUD. *Jurnal Pemasaran Pendidikan*, 11(4), 101–115.
- Wahyuningsih, I., Rahmawati, S., & Pratama, A. (2022). Pelatihan manajemen pemasaran lembaga PAUD berbasis web di TK LKMD Marsudisiwi dan TK Aisyiyah 20 Pajang Surakarta. *Dedikasi: Community Service Reports by UNS*, 4(1), 33–40.
- Widiastuti, S. (2021). Komunikasi dan kemitraan dalam pendidikan PAUD. *Jurnal Komunikasi Pendidikan*, 13(3), 87–94.
- Wijayanti, L. (2020). Manfaat keterlibatan orang tua di PAUD terhadap perkembangan anak. *Jurnal Pengembangan Anak*, 16(1), 89–97.
- Yuliana, F. (2020). Pengaruh pemasaran jasa terhadap partisipasi orang tua di PAUD. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 9(2), 45–51.
- Alhanif. (2020). Peran penting dan manfaat keterlibatan orang tua di PAUD: Membangun pondasi pendidikan anak yang kokoh. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 3(1), 42–49.
- Anggraeni, R. (2019). Strategi pemasaran pada pendidikan dasar: Implikasi bagi PAUD. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Pemasaran Pendidikan*, 5(2), 77–86.