

The Role of the Principal in Designing Marketing Strategies During the Admission of New Students

Nasywa Nurhasanah Ramadhani¹, Rubini²

nasywa125.nur@gmail.com¹, rubinihr@gmail.com²

^{1,2}Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Terpadu Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Keywords

Principal; Marketing Strategy; PPDB Period; Early Childhood Education; Salafi

Article History

Submission : 06-05-2026
Revised : 17-05-2026
Publish : 21-05-2026

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of school principals in designing and implementing educational marketing strategies at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten during the New Student Admission (PPDB) period. The research is motivated by the high competition of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) institutions in the Cisauk area, Tangerang Regency, so schools are required to have innovative and adaptive marketing strategies. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. The research informants consisted of the principal, three teachers, two parents of students, and one foundation administrator who were selected through purposive sampling techniques. Data collection was carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study showed that the principal implemented a marketing strategy based on segmentation, targeting, and positioning by highlighting the identity of the sunnah school based on tahfidz and salafiyah. The marketing strategy is carried out through strengthening the tahfidz flagship program, implementing all-in fees, using Instagram and WhatsApp social media, and strengthening relationship marketing through intensive communication with parents. The novelty of this research lies in the existence of a free screening program for prospective students as a psychological approach in the marketing of Islamic-based early childhood education. In addition, marketing success is also supported by the quality of human resources, school facilities, and a fun play-based learning process. This study concludes that the marketing of modern education in Islamic PAUD institutions is not only oriented towards promotion, but also on the development of image, service quality, and emotional relationships with the community in a sustainable manner.

This is an open access article under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)



INTRODUCTION

Education is an important instrument in improving the quality of life of the community because through education individuals can develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support active participation in social life. Education not only provides personal benefits in the form of improving the quality of life and human dignity, but is also a major factor in the social and economic development of the community (Hermanto & Ifendi, 2024). Therefore, education is seen as a long-term investment that has a strategic role in shaping human resources who are qualified, adaptive, and able to face the changing times. In this context, educational institutions are required to continue to

improve the quality of services in order to be able to meet the needs and expectations of an increasingly dynamic community.

The development of the world of education today shows that there is increasingly fierce competition, including at the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) level. Based on data from the Directorate of Early Childhood Education of the Ministry of Education in 2025/2026, the number of early childhood education units in Indonesia reached more than 215 thousand institutions consisting of kindergartens, play groups, daycare centers, and similar early childhood education units. West Java is one of the provinces with the largest number of PAUD institutions in Indonesia, reaching more than 40 thousand PAUD education

units. This condition shows the high level of competition between educational institutions in obtaining new students. This competition requires every educational institution to not only rely on academic quality, but also to be able to build a positive image and effective marketing strategies to remain in demand by the public.

In facing the competition, school principals play a very strategic role in determining the success and sustainability of educational institutions. The principal is not only responsible for the administrative aspect, but must also be able to carry out leadership, managerial, supervision, innovation, and motivation functions in an integrated manner. The concept of principal's leadership, known as EMASLIM, includes educators, managers, administrators, supervisors, leaders, innovators, and motivators as an important foundation in effective and sustainable school management (Mulyasa, 2018). This role is increasingly important when educational institutions are in a situation of high competition so that innovative managerial skills are required, including in designing educational marketing strategies.

Education marketing is basically the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating various strategies to introduce educational services to the community. Education marketing not only aims to attract new students, but also builds public trust in the quality of educational services provided. Mahanis and Nurhimah (2022) Explains that marketing strategy is an organization's effort to meet market needs through pricing, promotion, distribution, and appropriate service so that it is able to create customer satisfaction while achieving organizational goals. In the context of education, marketing strategies are an important part of improving the quality of educational services and building the institution's competitive advantage in a sustainable manner.

The change in the mindset of modern society towards early childhood education also affects the marketing pattern of educational institutions. Parents today not only consider the academic aspect, but also pay attention to the learning environment, religious values, character strengthening, school facilities, and children's mental health. This condition encourages educational institutions to innovate services to be able to answer the needs of the community more comprehensively. In the digital era, education marketing strategies have also undergone significant changes through the use of social media as a means of communication and

promotion. Social media is an effective medium in building the image of the school, expanding the reach of information, and building emotional relationships with the community.

Various studies on education marketing strategies have been conducted before. Research by Hermanto and Ifendi (2024) It shows that school principals have an important role in improving the marketing of educational services through strengthening the quality of services and promoting schools. Mahanis and Nurhimah Research (2022) It also explains that education marketing strategies can increase the competitiveness of institutions through an educational marketing mix approach. In addition, Nurbawani's research (2021) emphasized that the implementation of segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies can help new educational institutions in building identities and attracting public interest. The research of Ali et al. (2024) It also shows that school principals play a role in improving the quality of education through service-based marketing strategies and public communication.

Nonetheless, previous research has generally focused more on elementary schools, high schools, or other public educational institutions. Studies on education marketing strategies in salafiyah-based PAUD institutions are still very limited. In addition, most previous research only highlighted aspects of promotion and marketing mix in general without specifically discussing marketing strategies during the New Student Admission (PPDB) period. Previous research has also not examined the integration of social media and psychological approaches as part of education marketing strategies in Islamic-based PAUD institutions. Thus, there is a research gap that shows the need for more in-depth research on education marketing strategies in salafiyah-based PAUD institutions that are able to adapt to the needs of modern society.

Based on the research gap, this research has novelty in three main aspects. First, this research focuses on salafiyah-based PAUD institutions that integrate the values of the Qur'an and As-Sunnah in their education system. Second, this study examines education marketing strategies, especially during the PPDB period, which is an important momentum in competition between educational institutions. Third, this study highlights the integration of social media and psychological approaches, such as the child psychology screening program, as an innovation in educational marketing strategies that are still

rarely researched in Islamic PAUD institutions.

Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten is one of the early childhood education institutions that focuses on tahfidz Al-Qur'an education and the cultivation of salafiyah-based Islamic values. In its implementation, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten makes the Qur'an and As-Sunnah the main foundation in the formation of children's character and spirituality from an early age. This institution stands in the midst of high competition from PAUD institutions in the Cisauk area, Tangerang Regency, Banten. Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2026, the Cisauk area has a fairly high number of PAUD education units so that competition in obtaining new students becomes increasingly competitive. This condition requires educational institutions to have an innovative marketing strategy that is adaptive to the development of community needs.

In the midst of this competition, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten showed significant development. Since opening student admissions in 2021, the number of students has increased from 27 students in the first year to 78 students in 2025. The increase in the number of students shows that there is public trust in the quality of educational services provided by Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten. Although it had decreased in 2024, the number of students remained in the stable category and increased again the following year. This phenomenon is interesting to research because it shows that the marketing strategy implemented by schools is able to maintain and increase public interest in educational institutions.

This success is certainly inseparable from the role of school principals in designing and implementing education marketing strategies. School principals are required to be able to read market opportunities, understand community needs, build a positive image of the institution, and utilize social media as an effective means of promotion. In addition, innovation in the form of a free psychological screening program for prospective students is a form of institutional adaptation to increasing public awareness about children's mental health. The strategy shows that education marketing is not only oriented to promotion, but also to efforts to build emotional relationships and public trust in the quality of educational services.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the role of school principals in designing education marketing strategies at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten during the PPDB period. This research is important to provide an overview of the

implementation of education marketing strategies in salafiyah-based PAUD institutions in the midst of increasingly fierce educational competition. In addition, this research is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of education marketing management studies, especially in Islamic PAUD institutions, as well as become a practical reference for school principals and education managers in designing marketing strategies that are innovative, adaptive, and in accordance with the needs of modern society.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study research type to understand in depth the role of school principals in designing education marketing strategies at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten during the PPDB period. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on revealing social phenomena naturally through direct interaction with the research subjects (Moleong, 2017). The research was carried out at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten which is located in Cisauk District, Tangerang Regency, Banten. The research informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques by considering direct involvement in the implementation of school marketing strategies. The informants consisted of the principal as the main informant, three teachers, two parents of students, and one foundation administrator. Data collection was carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation related to PPDB activities, school promotion media, and data on the development of the number of students. The research stages start from initial field observation, determination of research focus, data collection, data analysis, to systematic conclusion drawn.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification (Miles & Huberman, 2014). Data reduction is carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying the data from interviews, observations, and documentation to match the focus of the research. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of a descriptive narrative to make it easier for researchers to understand the patterns and relationships between the data. The last stage is carried out by drawing conclusions and repeatedly verifying to ensure the validity of the research findings. This analysis model is interactive and continues continuously until the data reaches a saturation point. To

maintain the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation and triangulation techniques by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation from various informants (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). In addition, the researcher also conducts member checks on the main informant to ensure the suitability of the data interpretation results with the actual conditions so that the research results have a stronger level of credibility.

DISCUSSION

Marketing Strategy of Kindergarten Principal Tafaqquh Fiddin

School principals have a central role in determining the direction of educational institution development, including in building an effective education marketing strategy. In Government Regulation Number 28 of 1990, it is stated that school principals are responsible for the implementation of education, school administration, education personnel development, and the management of educational facilities and infrastructure. These responsibilities show that the principal not only functions as an educational administrator, but also as a strategic leader who is able to read the needs of the community and create institutional innovations. In the context of increasingly fierce educational competition, the ability of school principals to design marketing strategies is an important factor for the sustainability of educational institutions.

The results of the study show that the principal of Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten implements a structured marketing strategy through a segmentation, targeting, and positioning approach. This strategy begins by identifying the needs of the surrounding community, especially parents who want early childhood education based on Salafi Islam. The market segmentation is focused on middle-class Muslim families who have concerns about religious education, moral formation, and religious learning environment for children from an early age. These findings show that the marketing strategy of Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten is not carried out in general, but based on a clear analysis of consumer characteristics so that the marketing program becomes more targeted.

At the targeting stage, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten targets Muslim families in the Cisauk area and its surroundings. This strategy is carried out by considering the social conditions of the community who are increasingly selective in choosing early childhood education institutions.

Modern parents consider not only the cost of education, but also the quality of learning, environmental safety, strengthening religious values, and the mental health of the child. Therefore, the principal seeks to provide educational services that are in accordance with the needs of modern society without leaving the school's salafiyah identity. These findings are in line with research Maharani et al. (2025) which explains that the success of Islamic PAUD marketing is influenced by the institution's ability to understand changing needs of the community and adapt educational services in a relevant way.

In terms of positioning, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten positions itself as an early childhood education institution based on the "Sunnah School" which focuses on the formation of monotheism and *aqidah salimah* from an early age. This positioning is the main differentiator compared to other PAUD institutions in the Cisauk area, the majority of which also carry the concept of Islamic education. This positioning strategy is important because in education marketing, differentiation is the main factor in building the image of the institution in the eyes of the public. Clear Research and Clear and Clear (2022) explained that Islamic boarding school-based educational institutions that have superior program differentiation tend to be better able to maintain public trust and increase the number of students.

Based on the results of observations, the marketing strategy implemented by the principal does not only focus on promotion, but also involves strengthening the quality of educational services. This can be seen from the development of superior *tahfidz* programs, habituation of Islamic manners, the use of social media, and good communication services to parents. This approach shows that educational marketing at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten has led to the concept of relationship marketing, which is building long-term relationships with the community through satisfaction of educational services. This strategy is different from conventional marketing which is only oriented towards increasing the number of students without paying attention to the loyalty of educational customers.

Product Strategy

Products in education marketing are the main services offered by schools to the community. In the context of early childhood education, educational products are not only in the form of teaching and learning activities, but also include the quality of character formation,

learning environment, and educational experiences obtained by students. The results of the study show that Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten makes salafiyah-based education the main product of the institution. The flagship programs offered are in the form of memorization of juz 30, daily prayers, short hadiths, and the formation of Islamic manners from an early age.

Strengthening religious education in early childhood is a strategy that is relevant to the needs of modern society who are beginning to worry about the moral degradation of children. Mahardhani et al. (2021) Explained that religious education has an important role in character formation and control of children's behavior from an early age. Therefore, educational institutions that are able to integrate religious learning and modern education have a greater chance of gaining public trust. The findings of this study show that school principals have managed to leverage this need as a key force in the institution's marketing strategy.

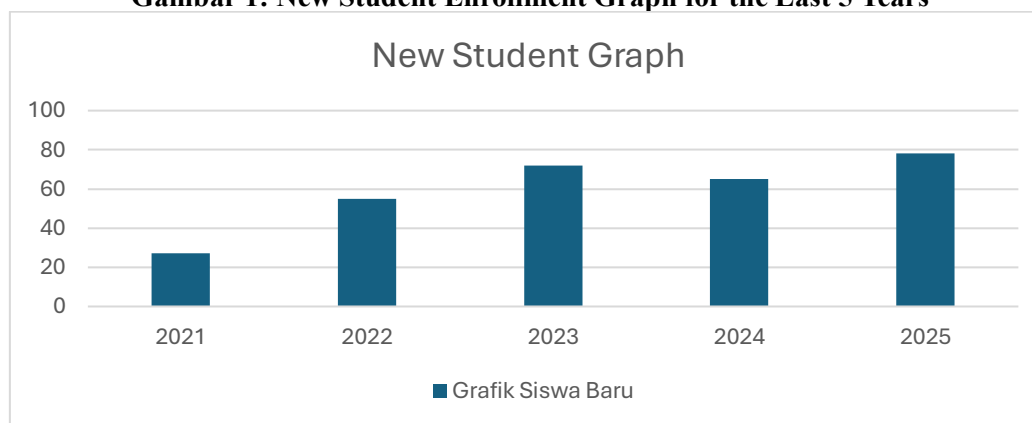
In addition to tahfidz programs and religious education, Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten also implements an Independent Curriculum combined with salafiyah values. The implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5) is directed at the formation of daily manners such as respecting teachers, parents, and peers. This strategy is a form of educational innovation that shows the ability of

schools to integrate national education policies with the identity of Islamic-based institutions. The results of this study reinforce the findings Sumiyati & Nurkhsi'in (2019) which states that the success of PAUD marketing is greatly influenced by the quality of superior programs and the differentiation of educational services owned by the institution.

Another interesting finding is the existence of a free psychologist screening program for prospective students. This program is a novelty as well as a marketing strategy that has not been widely implemented by other PAUD institutions in the Cisauk area. The presence of psychologist services shows that Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten is able to read the changes in the characteristics of millennial and Generation Z parents who are increasingly concerned about children's mental health. The strategy not only has educational value, but also provides emotional and economic value for the community. Critically, this strategy shows that modern educational marketing no longer simply promotes school facilities, but also presents solutions to the psychological needs of families.

In terms of increasing the number of students, the product strategy implemented showed significant results. Data on the development of Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten students can be seen in the following table:

Gambar 1: New Student Enrollment Graph for the Last 5 Years



The increase in the number of students shows that the differentiation of educational products carried out by Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten has succeeded in increasing public trust. Despite the decline in 2024, the number of students remains in the stable category and will increase again in 2025. This shows that the school's marketing strategy is not temporary, but

is able to maintain community loyalty in the long run.

Pricing Strategy

The price strategy is one of the important elements in marketing educational services because it is directly related to the ability of the community to access the educational services

offered by the school. In the context of education, prices are not only understood as school fees, but include all expenses that parents must pay, such as registration fees, learning activities, facilities, and other supporting needs. Fatmariyanti et al. (2024) Explained that the pricing of educational services is influenced by various factors, such as the quality of services, school facilities, investment in infrastructure, and the position of institutions in educational competition. The right pricing strategy will help schools strike a balance between service quality and affordability for the community. Therefore, pricing in educational institutions is not only aimed at making profits, but also building public trust in the transparency and quality of services provided by schools.

Based on the results of the research, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten has a different pricing strategy compared to other PAUD institutions in the surrounding area, namely through the concept of "all in" fees. This strategy provides certainty to parents because all of their children's educational needs have been included in one cost package without any additional levies during the education process. The cost of activities such as outing classes, competitions, and graduation has been integrated into the school payment system so that parents do not have to worry about sudden expenses outside of the main cost. The strategy provides a sense of security and psychological comfort for parents because cost management becomes more transparent and predictable. Analytically, the all-in cost concept shows that schools understand the needs of modern society that wants a practical, clear, and financially burdensome education system. This strategy is also one of the attractions for people outside the salaf group who are starting to be interested in registering their children at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten.

In addition to implementing the concept of an all-in fee, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten also uses incentive strategies to expand the school's marketing reach. This form of strategy is realized through the provision of a 10% sibling discount for parents who register more than one child and a referral system for parents or alumni who successfully recommend the school to prospective new students. This strategy shows that schools not only focus on external promotion, but also leverage customer loyalty as part of educational marketing. In service marketing theory, giving discounts and rewards to loyal customers is a form of relationship marketing that aims to strengthen the emotional relationship between the institution

and consumers (Gronroos, 1994). With this strategy, parents feel more appreciated so that the level of satisfaction and loyalty to the school increases. This condition indirectly encourages the formation of word of mouth promotion which is very effective in marketing early childhood education.

In addition to discount and referral strategies, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten also utilizes Islamic school exhibition activities such as MLF as a promotional medium as well as a price strategy. In this activity, the school provides prizes in the form of discounts on entrance fees for outstanding competition participants so that they are able to attract the interest of prospective students through the achievement path. This strategy shows that prices are not only positioned as a cost that society must pay, but also as a promotional instrument to build a positive image of the school. Overall, the price strategy implemented by Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten shows a combination of cost affordability, service transparency, and providing added value to the community. These findings are in line with research on education marketing strategies which states that price has a great influence on parents' interest in choosing a school, especially when balanced with good service quality and a positive image of the institution (Mujid & Andrian, 2021).

Promotion Strategy

Promotional strategies are an important part of marketing educational services because they serve to communicate the advantages of school services to the public. In the context of education, promotion not only aims to introduce institutions, but also build public image, trust, and interest in the quality of educational services offered. Based on the results of interviews and observations, TK Tafaqquh Fiddin uses two main approaches in its promotion strategy, namely digital promotion through social media and word-of-mouth recommendation-based promotion. The strategy is carried out in a targeted manner by adjusting the characteristics of the target market which is dominated by young Muslim families who actively use digital media. These findings are in line with research Ariyani et al. (2024) which explains that social media is an effective means in education marketing because it is able to expand the reach of information while building a positive image of the institution quickly and interactively.

In its implementation, Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten uses the Instagram platform as the main media for school promotion. Social media

management is done creatively by presenting content that is interesting, relevant, and in accordance with the needs of the target market. The school not only uploads information on learning activities, but also displays student activities, Islamic manners habituation, tahfidz programs, and parenting educational content that is close to the lives of today's parents. The use of Instagram is carried out by paying attention to the pattern of social media algorithms so that the promotional reach becomes wider and on target. In addition to Instagram, WhatsApp is also used as a direct communication medium through a broadcast system to ummahat groups and the study community. This strategy was chosen because it is considered effective in reaching community groups who have an interest in salafiyah-based education. Research on social media-based PAUD marketing also shows that the use of digital technology can increase school visibility and strengthen communication relationships between educational institutions and the community.

In addition to digital promotion, the main strength of Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten's promotional strategy lies in word-of-mouth recommendations. Parents' satisfaction with the quality of educational services is the main factor that drives them to recommend the school to their families and the surrounding environment. Children's success in memorizing the Qur'an, forming daily manners, and developing Islamic character becomes a positive experience that naturally forms social promotion in society. In modern marketing theory, word of mouth is considered one of the most effective forms of promotion because it comes from the real experience of consumers so that the level of trust is higher than ordinary advertising (Irawan, 2023). Research on electronic word of mouth also explains that the combination of social media and customer recommendations can strengthen public trust in an institution or product. In addition, the transparent all-in fee system further strengthens parents' trust as they feel they are getting clear, quality and cost-effective educational services.

Analytically, the promotional strategy implemented by Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten shows a change in the pattern of education marketing in the digital era. Educational promotion no longer relies only on conventional brochures or banners, but emphasizes more on building the school's image through social media and positive customer experiences. School principals are able to read changes in the behavior

of modern society who are more active in seeking educational information through digital platforms and community recommendations. This condition shows that the success of education marketing is greatly influenced by the institution's ability to build emotional relationships with the community through creative, open, and sustainable communication. These findings also show that effective educational promotion depends not only on the intensity of advertising, but also on the quality of services that are able to create public satisfaction and loyalty to schools.

Human Resource Strategy

Human resource strategy is one of the important components in the marketing of educational services because the quality of school services is greatly influenced by the competence and professionalism of educators. In educational institutions, teachers and education staff are parties who interact directly with students and parents, so that the quality of communication, service, and the learning process they carry out will determine the image of the institution in the eyes of the public. Arifin (2009) explained that the success of educational services is greatly influenced by the quality of human resources, especially teachers as the main implementers of the learning process. Therefore, educational institutions need to have a sustainable human resource development system in order to be able to adapt to the development of educational needs and social changes in society. In the context of increasingly fierce competition for early childhood education, teacher quality is not only seen as an academic factor, but also an important part of the school's marketing strategy.

Based on the results of the research, the principal of Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten actively encourages teachers to participate in various competency development activities such as training, seminars, webinars, and strengthening digital literacy. This strategy is carried out so that teachers not only have good pedagogic skills, but also are able to understand the development of early childhood education issues, child protection, children's mental health, and the use of technology in learning. The development of these competencies shows that schools strive to build human resources that are adaptive to the changing times and the needs of modern society. These findings are in line with Miftakhi and Pramusinto's research (2023) which explains that tiered training for PAUD teachers is able to improve the quality of learning, professionalism of educators, and the

effectiveness of educational services as a whole. Thus, the development of teacher competencies not only has an impact on improving the quality of learning, but also strengthens the competitiveness of educational institutions in the midst of competition between schools.

In addition to improving academic and pedagogic competence, Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten also pays special attention to the communication skills of teachers with students' parents. This strategy is carried out because the characteristics of parents of the millennial generation and generation Z today tend to be more active in monitoring their children's development and require open, fast, and transparent communication from the school. Teachers are not only required to be able to teach well, but also must be able to explain children's development, provide solutions to learning problems, and build harmonious relationships with parents. This condition shows that educational institutions need to adapt to the social changes of modern society which is increasingly critical and selective in choosing educational services. Research on school-parent relationship management also explains that good communication between teachers and parents can increase parental satisfaction and strengthen public trust in schools.

Analytically, the human resource strategy implemented by Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten shows that modern education marketing is not only oriented to external promotion, but also requires strengthening internal marketing through improving the quality of teachers and education personnel. Teacher professionalism, communication skills, and good service attitude will provide a positive experience for students and parents so as to create community loyalty to the school. When parents are satisfied with the quality of services and children's development, they will indirectly recommend the school to other communities through word-of-mouth promotion. Therefore, human resources are strategic assets that greatly determine the success of education marketing at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten. With continuous competency development, good communication skills, and adaptation to social changes in society, schools are able to build a professional, responsive, and trusted institutional image in the midst of increasingly competitive early childhood education competition.

Physical Evidence Strategy

The physical evidence strategy is one of the important elements in marketing educational

services because it is directly related to public perception of the quality of school services. In the context of educational institutions, physical evidence includes school buildings, classrooms, learning facilities, environmental cleanliness, and the comfort of other supporting facilities that can be seen and felt directly by students and parents. Junaris and Hariyanti (2022) explained that complete, comfortable, and well-maintained educational facilities are able to increase the attractiveness of educational institutions and strengthen public trust in the quality of schools. Therefore, physical evidence is an important part of building a positive image of educational institutions, especially at the level of early childhood education which strongly considers the safety and comfort factors of the child's learning environment. In the increasingly competitive conditions of PAUD competition in the Cisauk area, the quality of facilities is one of the main differentiating factors between educational institutions.

Based on the results of the research, Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten has a variety of facilities that are quite complete and support the early childhood learning process. These facilities include air-conditioned classrooms, children's libraries, playgrounds, School Health Unit (UKS) rooms, halls equipped with projectors, and reading corners in each classroom. In addition, the school also maintains the cleanliness of the environment and the comfort of the learning room so that children feel safe and at home while participating in learning activities. These adequate facilities not only function as a means of supporting teaching and learning activities, but also become an effective marketing tool in attracting public interest. Parents tend to give more trust to schools that have a safe, clean, comfortable, and developmental learning environment. These findings are in line with research that explains that the quality of educational facilities has a significant influence on parents' decisions in choosing a school for their children (Olivia & Yoga, 2024).

Analytically, the physical evidence strategy applied by Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten shows a change in the marketing pattern of Islamic-based early childhood education. If previously Islamic PAUD institutions relied more on religious identity, tahfidz programs, and worship habits as the main attractions, now the community also pays great attention to the quality of facilities and the comfort of the learning environment. Modern parents, especially millennials and generation Z,

not only consider spiritual aspects, but also pay attention to the factors of safety, health, cleanliness, and comfort of children's educational facilities. This shows that modern education marketing requires schools to be able to integrate religious values with professional and quality physical services. Thus, school facilities are no longer seen as mere complements, but have become a strategic part of building the image of educational institutions in the midst of increasingly fierce competition.

In addition to having an impact on increasing the attractiveness of schools, the existence of adequate facilities also affects parental satisfaction and the effectiveness of the children's learning process. A comfortable learning environment can help children be more focused, active, and enthusiastic in participating in learning activities. On the other hand, good facilities are also an indicator of the school's professionalism in providing educational services to the community. Therefore, the principal of Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten continues to strive to maintain and improve the quality of school infrastructure facilities as part of a sustainable education marketing strategy. This strategy shows that the success of education marketing is determined not only by excellent promotions and programs, but also by the school's ability to provide tangible physical evidence of service and in accordance with societal expectations. With a combination of Islamic values, quality of facilities, and the comfort of the learning environment, Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten is able to build public trust while strengthening the institution's position in the midst of the competition for PAUD in the Cisauk area.

Process Strategy

Process strategy in education marketing is closely related to how educational services are provided to students and parents in a consistent, quality, and in accordance with the needs of children's development. Based on the results of the research, Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten applies the learning concept of "learning while playing" with a centered approach that places children as the center of learning. This approach is realized through various activities such as role-playing, demonstrations, storytelling, environmental exploration, and hands-on practical activities designed according to the characteristics of early childhood. The strategy shows that the learning process at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten is not only oriented towards academic achievement, but

also prioritizes the comfort, happiness, and active involvement of children during the learning process. In the context of education marketing, the quality of the learning process is one of the main factors that shape the positive perception of the public towards educational institutions.

The play-based learning approach applied at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten is in line with various studies on the effectiveness of exploratory learning in early childhood. Research Suryaningsih et al. (2016) Explaining that game-based learning is able to increase children's creativity and involvement in the learning process because children get fun and meaningful learning experiences. In addition, exploratory learning also provides space for children to develop curiosity, social skills, and problem-solving skills through real-life experiences. Other research on play-based learning shows that learning strategies involving simulation, games, and exploration are more effective in increasing children's interest in learning than conventional one-way learning methods (Dewi, 2022). Thus, the process strategy applied by Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten shows the compatibility between learning practices in the field and early childhood education theory which emphasizes the importance of active and fun learning.

In addition to the main learning process, Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten also provides various extracurricular activities as a means of developing children's talents and creativity. These activities are designed to support children's overall growth and development, both in cognitive, social, emotional, and motor aspects. This strategy shows that schools understand the needs of a modern society that not only wants children to be able to read and count, but also have good character, creativity, and social skills. In its implementation, school principals also routinely evaluate learning through classroom supervision, teacher evaluation meetings, and educator competency development through internal training and comparative studies to other institutions. This step reflects the application of the principle of continuous improvement in education management, which is an effort to improve the quality of services in a sustainable manner so that the education process remains relevant to the development of the needs of society and the modern world of education.

Analytically, the process strategy implemented by Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten has a positive impact on increasing parental satisfaction and the image of the school in the community. Parents not only judge schools by the

facilities or promotions they make, but also by the quality of the learning experience that children feel every day. When children feel comfortable, enjoy learning, and show positive development, the level of public trust in schools will increase naturally through word-of-mouth promotion. This condition shows that process strategy is an important part of marketing educational services because the quality of services provided directly will determine the loyalty of education customers. Therefore, the success of educational marketing at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten is not only influenced by the school's promotion and branding, but also by the quality of the learning process that is able to provide a fun, meaningful, and appropriate educational experience in accordance with the needs of early childhood development.

Factors Influencing Educational Marketing at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten

The factors that affect education marketing at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten consist of supporting factors and inhibiting factors that are interrelated in determining the success of the school's marketing strategy. Based on the results of the research, the main supporting factor comes from the strength of school branding which carries the concept of tahfidz and salafiyah education. In the Cisauk area, the concept has become a strong identity because there are not many PAUD institutions that consistently implement tahfidz-based sunnah education from an early age. This condition is a unique selling point that strengthens the position of Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten in the midst of high competition between PAUD institutions. These findings are in line with research on early childhood education marketing strategies which states that the differentiation of superior programs is an important factor in maintaining the existence and competitiveness of early childhood education institutions (Pratiwi & Munastiwi, 2020).

In addition to the power of branding, the use of social media is also a very influential supporting factor in expanding the reach of school promotion. Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten actively publishes various student activities through Instagram and WhatsApp platforms so that the public can see firsthand learning activities, tahfidz programs, Islamic manners, and children's learning environment. This strategy shows that social media is not only used as a means of disseminating information, but also as a tool to build a positive image of the institution in the eyes

of the public. The results of this study support the findings of Ariyani, Hadi, and Komariah who explain that social media-based education marketing can increase public attraction and trust in educational institutions if done creatively, consistently, and in accordance with the needs of the target market (Ariyani et al., 2024).

Another supporting factor is the full support from the foundation for the innovations carried out by school principals in developing education marketing strategies. School principals are given the flexibility to develop promotional programs, child psychology services, improve school facilities, and strengthen the quality of learning. The synergy between the foundation and the principal is an important capital in creating marketing innovations that are adaptive to the development of community needs. Theoretically, the success of education marketing is not only determined by the individual abilities of the principal, but also influenced by the support of the organization and the management of the institution as a whole. Strong internal support allows decision-making processes to run more effectively and responsively to the dynamics of educational competition (Ma'arif et al., 2025).

On the other hand, this study also found several inhibiting factors in the implementation of educational marketing at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten. One of the main obstacles is the limited parking space because the location of the school is in a residential environment. This condition has the potential to reduce the comfort of parents when dropping off and picking up children, especially during peak school hours. In addition, the high competition between PAUD institutions in the Cisauk area is a challenge for schools to maintain their attractiveness. Many other educational institutions offer similar programs, such as tahfidz, Islamic learning, and modern facilities, so Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten must continue to innovate in order to maintain a competitive advantage. This condition shows that education marketing is a dynamic process that requires continuous evaluation and strategy development so that schools can survive in increasingly fierce competition.

Overall, the success of education marketing at Tafaquh Fiddin Kindergarten is influenced by a combination of the quality of educational programs, service innovation, the power of school branding, the use of social media, teacher professionalism, school facilities, and the ability of the principal to understand the needs of modern society. The marketing strategy implemented is

not only oriented towards increasing the number of students, but also building emotional relationships and public trust in the quality of educational services provided. The findings of this study show that modern education marketing no longer only relies on conventional promotion, but demands the ability of educational institutions to build a sustainable image, service, and communication with the community. Thus, education marketing in Islamic-based PAUD institutions requires an innovative, adaptive, and community-based approach to be able to maintain the existence of institutions in the midst of increasingly competitive educational competition.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that the education marketing strategy implemented at Tafaqquh Fiddin Kindergarten is carried out in an integrated manner through strengthening product strategies, prices, promotions, human resources, physical evidence, and educational service processes. The success of school marketing is influenced by the ability of the principal to read the needs of modern society without abandoning the identity of salafiyah-based institutions. The novelty of this research lies in the application of salafiyah value-based education marketing strategies combined with the use of social media and psychological approaches through a free psychological screening program for prospective students. The strategy shows that modern education marketing is not only oriented to the promotion of institutions, but also to building emotional relationships, community trust, and providing services that are relevant to the needs of millennial and Generation Z parents. Foundation support, quality of teachers, school facilities, and a fun learning approach are also important factors in strengthening the attractiveness of educational institutions in the eyes of the public.

However, this research still has limitations because it was only conducted in one early childhood education institution so that the results of the research cannot be generalized to all Islamic-based PAUD institutions. In addition, this study focuses more on the perspectives of school principals, teachers, and parents so that it has not studied in depth the influence of marketing strategies on the level of community loyalty in the long term. Therefore, further research is recommended to develop a study on the effectiveness of digital education marketing, the influence of social media on parents' decision to choose schools, and the implementation of

psychological services in early childhood education marketing in various types of educational institutions. The next research can also use a mixed methods approach to obtain more comprehensive data on the relationship between education marketing strategies, parental satisfaction, and increasing the number of students. Thus, the results of the research are expected to contribute more broadly to the development of innovative, adaptive, and sustainable Islamic education marketing strategies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ali, N., Roesminingsih, E., & Riyanto, Y. (2024). Strategi Pemasaran Kepala Sekolah untuk Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan di SD Nation Star Academy Surabaya. *Edu Cendikia: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 4(3), 1092–1100. <https://doi.org/10.47709/educendikia.v4i03.5048>
- Anggito, A., & Setiawan, J. (2018). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Sukabumi: CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher).
- Arifin, J. (2009). *Etika Bisnis Islami*. Semarang: Walisongo Press.
- Ariyani, R., Hadi, S., & Komariah, N. (2024). Strategi Pemasaran Pendidikan Melalui Media Sosial. *Jurnal Mikraf: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 5(2), 1–8.
- Bening, T. P., & 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), 466–480. <https://doi.org/10.35473/ijec.v4i2.1700>
- Dewi, S. L. (2022). Pengaruh Pembelajaran Berbasis Permainan pada Pendidikan dan Perkembangan Anak Usia Dini. *Aulad: Journal on Early Childhood*, 5(2), 313–319. <https://doi.org/10.31004/aulad.v5i2.346>
- Fatmariyanti, Y., Bahaf, A. M., & Zohriah, A. (2024). Strategi Penentuan Harga Jasa Pendidikan. *Ta'rim: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Anak Usia Dini*, 5(1), 22–31. <https://doi.org/10.59059/tarim.v5i1.800>
- Gronroos, C. (1994). From Marketing Mix to Relationship Marketing: Towards a Paradigm Shift in Marketing. *Management Decision*, 32(2), 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251749710169729>
- Hermanto, H., & Ifendi, M. (2024). Peran Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan di SMA Negeri 2 Muara

- Wahau. *An-Nadzir: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 2(1), 26–35. <https://doi.org/10.55799/annadzir.v2i01.436>
- Irawan, E. (2023). Konsep Strategi Word of Mouth Marketing dalam Peningkatan Pengembangan Bisnis: Suatu Tinjauan Literatur. *Sammajiva: Jurnal Penelitian Bisnis dan Manajemen*, 1(3), 293–303. <https://doi.org/10.47861/sammajiva.v1i2.482>
- Junaris, I., & Haryanti, N. (2022). *Manajemen Pemasaran Pendidikan*. Purbalangga: CV. Eureka Media Aksara.
- Ma'arif, M. S., Samsu, S., & Putra, D. (2025). Strategi Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan Dalam Meningkatkan Animo Masyarakat di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Swasta Mamba'ul Ulum Kota Jambi. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 10(3), 1555–1563. <https://doi.org/10.34125/jmp.v10i3.827>
- Mahanis, J., & Nurhikmah. (2022). Strategi Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan. *Tadribuna: Journal of Islamic Management Education*, 2(1), 57–67. <https://doi.org/10.61456/tjiec.v2i2.24>
- Maharani, Syafe'i, M., Sholihah, M., & Azzahra, M. (2025). Strategi Pemasaran Lembaga PAUD Islam dalam Meningkatkan Animo Masyarakat. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Studies*, 5(2), 434–464. <https://doi.org/10.54180/joeces.v5i2.667>
- Mahardhani, A. J., Sekarningrum, D. F., & Rugayah. (2021). Strategi Pemasaran TK Aisyiah Bustanul Athfal 15 Madiun. *Jurnal Dimensi Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 9(2), 116–122. <https://doi.org/10.24269/dpp.v9i2.4420>
- Miftakhi, D. R., & Pramusinto, H. (2023). Implementasi Peningkatan Profesionalisme Guru PAUD melalui Diklat Berjenjang. *Papernia: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal for Innovative Research*, 1(1), 9–15. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7618997>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2014). *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-metode Baru*. Jakarta: UI Press.
- Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Mujid, A., & Andrian. (2021). Strategi Citra Merek, Kualitas Pelayanan, dan Harga Terhadap Minat Melanjutkan Sekolah. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Ubhara*, 3(2), 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.31599/jmu.v3i2.946>
- Mulyasa, E. (2018). *Menjadi Kepala Sekolah Profesional*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nurbawani, A. (2021). Strategi Kepala Sekolah Dalam Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan di Lembaga Pendidikan Baru Pada Era Marketing 4.0 (Studi Kasus di SMK BP Subulul Huda). *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management*, 2(1), 52–73. <https://doi.org/10.21154/sajiem.v2i1.41>
- Olivia, C., & Yoga, R. A. (2024). Pengaruh Kualitas Layanan, Fasilitas Pendidikan dan Program Ektrakurikuler Terhadap Keputusan Orangtua Memilih Sekolah. *Mufakat: Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen Dan Akuntansi*, 3(2), 450–454.
- Pratiwi, I., & Munastiwi, E. (2020). Analisis Strategi Pemasaran PAUD. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Early Childhood Education*, 5(2), 35–40. <https://doi.org/10.51529/ijiece.v5i2.192>
- Sumiyati, & Nurkhosi'in. (2019). Strategi Pencitraan Dan Pemasaran Lembaga PAUD. *JCE: Journal of Childhood Education*, 3(2), 124–138. <https://doi.org/10.30736/jce.v3i1.92>
- Suryaningsih, N. M. A., Cahaya, I. M. E., & Poerwati, C. E. (2016). Implementasi Pembelajaran Inkuiri Terbimbing Berbasis Permainan Dalam Meningkatkan Kreativitas Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 5(2), 212–220. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jpi-undiksha.v5i2.8559>