

# Improving The Quality Of Early Childhood Education Through Branding Management

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**Abstract:** The ability to manage modern educational institutions by choosing positioning, differentiation, and branding is a force that can influence consumers (communities) to become loyal customers. This study aims to develop a model to raise the image of early childhood education institutions through training activities and imaging management assistance. This activity attends by 36 Principals and Teachers from 20 Raudhatul Athfal educational institutions in the City of Denpasar within the Ministry of Religion of the Province of Bali. The method is carried out with community development in which the community (community members of RA) is directed to achieve better social, economic, and cultural conditions through branding management training. With this training, it expects that RA education institutions can be more independent with better quality. The results of this research are: (1) Participants have knowledge and skills to develop the competitive school, (2) Where the position of the institution in the community, (3) How to differentiate the school, and (4) How to effectively school's marketing.

**Index Terms:** management, positioning, differentiation, branding.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The existence of Islamic educational institutions requires marketing or promotion as an organization or professional institution. The marketing is done to identify and describe the level of public interest towards the institution concerned. Not only educational institutions that have to establish but long-standing ones also need promotion, even those that are already well-known. Promotional activities can also use as an explanation and rationalization mechanism for a program offering various advantages, both in terms of inputs, outputs, and graduates (outcomes). Besides, promotion is a means to convey public accountability about the process and results of education that have been implemented and developed. The image and credibility of an institution will last long if it is always aware of, maintain, and develop various right conditions from time to time. By way of promotion, the decline in interest can use as a basis for tracing the weaknesses of institutions internally and external factors involved in forming negative opinions on the institution. From here, a learning institution for the next step improvement. That is why there are educational institutions that are expensive, far from locations, difficult to enter but are still sought by the community. [1] Referring to Early Childhood Education Standards, early childhood education institutions (PAUD) are the only primary educational institutions that have many products. The early childhood education institutions manage the education of children aged 0-6 years, which includes: Day Care (0-2 years), Play Group (2-4 years), and Kindergarten (4-6 years). [2] Thus, as a professional institution, the concept of marketing strategy still refers to the marketing strategy of economics that adapt to the marketing of RA institutions. The concept is oriented to consumer satisfaction, promotes the values of community service, and does not neglect the welfare of educators and the provision of adequate educational facilities. According to Imam Robandi (in Mulyana, 2012) that the growth of a school is no longer taboo openly discussed can follow the social dynamics of the community. [3] The growth of RA-level educational

institutions in Indonesia mark by the emergence of Islamic kindergartens such as Al-Azhar 21 Kindergarten, Budi Mulia Dua Kindergarten, Primagama Kindergarten, Khalifa Kindergarten, Lazuardi, Integrated Islamic Kindergarten, and others in the context of school marketing was much appreciated positive from the community. In a relatively short time, these schools overgrew and received high interest from the community. The RA institutions, in general, are older but tend to be stagnant both in terms of several students, quality, and educational facilities. As for the new schools, it is never empty of enthusiasts and is increasingly expanding branches in the regions. The ability of these institutions to take positioning, differentiation, and branding is a force that can influence consumers (communities) to become loyal customers (service users). According to Kotler (2000), the ability to meet people's desires according to their social needs is the success of marketing. What are the wants and needs of the community that are captured as opportunities and realizes by providing professional and satisfying services? With modern management, these leading educational institutions have succeeded in building positive branding in the community. [4] Based on data from the Education Unit (NPSN) PAUD Kemendikbud in 2018 that in terms of quantity, the number of RA institutions is far less than TK (Kindergarten). [5] The number of TK / RA unit institutions is 120,891, with the composition of TK at 92,009 and RA at 28,882 (Table 1). From these data, it appears that people prefer TK rather than RA.

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**TABLE 1***Number of Education Unit (School) Data Per Province*

No	PROVINCE	TK	RA	TOTAL
	TOTAL	92,009	28,882	120,891
1	<u>D.K.I. Jakarta</u>	2,347	1,017	3,364
2	<u>Jawa Barat</u>	8,765	6,82	15,585
3	<u>Jawa Tengah</u>	14,104	4,627	18,731
4	<u>D.I. Yogyakarta</u>	2,149	235	2,384
5	<u>Jawa Timur</u>	18,383	7,008	25,391
6	<u>Aceh</u>	2,518	333	2,851
7	<u>Sumatera Utara</u>	2,701	1,836	4,537
8	<u>Sumatera Barat</u>	2,383	393	2,776
9	<u>Riau</u>	2,312	455	2,767
10	<u>Jambi</u>	1,319	239	1,558
11	<u>Sumatera Selatan</u>	2,037	440	2,477
12	<u>Lampung</u>	2,974	647	3,621
13	<u>Kalimantan Barat</u>	811	153	964
14	<u>Kalimantan Tengah</u>	1,87	158	2,028
15	<u>Kalimantan Selatan</u>	2,438	333	2,771
16	<u>Kalimantan Timur</u>	1,379	116	1,495
17	<u>Sulawesi Utara</u>	1,735	156	1,891
18	<u>Sulawesi Tengah</u>	2,025	110	2,135
19	<u>Sulawesi Selatan</u>	4,244	666	4,91
20	<u>Sulawesi Tenggara</u>	1,895	206	2,101
21	<u>Maluku</u>	721	66	787
22	<u>Bali</u>	1,592	99	1,691
23	<u>Nusa Tenggara Barat</u>	1,798	576	2,374
24	<u>Nusa Tenggara Timur</u>	1,607	119	1,726
25	<u>Papua</u>	682	26	708
26	<u>Bengkulu</u>	1,074	136	1,21
27	<u>Maluku Utara</u>	631	61	692
28	<u>Banten</u>	2,263	1,378	3,641
29	<u>Kepulauan Bangka Belitung</u>	363	48	411
30	<u>Gorontalo</u>	854	41	895
31	<u>Kepulauan Riau</u>	653	173	826
32	<u>Papua Barat</u>	389	49	438
33	<u>Sulawesi Barat</u>	816	138	954
34	<u>Kalimantan Utara</u>	170	24	194
35	<u>Overseas</u>	7	0	7

Based on preliminary research and discussions with administrators of the Raudhatul Athfal (IGRA) Teacher Association, the lack of community interest in RA institutions is due to the image of RA itself in the community. RA institutions considered second class when compared to kindergarten. In addition to the smaller number of institutions, the number of students is also far adrift. The fact is that coaching in RA education institutions is still very minimal compared to institutions under the district education office. So much is needed training and assistance in imaging management (rebranding) to all RA institution managers to boost their image and improve competitiveness in the community. From the explanation, it can formulate how to develop a model through training and mentoring for Organizers, Principals, Teachers, and Administrative Staff at Raudhatul Athfal (RA) educational institutions in the environment. The Ministry of Religion (Kemenag). So that it becomes a superior Islamic early childhood education institution, increases its competitiveness, and becomes the people's first choice.

### 1.1 Literature Reviews and Theory Basis

After reviewing and analyzing the results of research on marketing management, are considered relevant to this research are: (1) In a study conducted by Vera Nilasari (2013) with the title "School Marketing Management in Al-Kautsar Elementary School Malang." The results of this study indicate that the implementation of marketing, such as publications through internet media, electronic media, print media, SMS centers. Provides a school fleet with the school's identity written, School Environment Introduction activities, outbound, open house, the identity of "Production-Based School." So social service, brochures, newsletters, leaflets, banners, banners; using mass media (Batu Tv, J-Tv, CRTV, Cosmonita radio, RRI, Educational Newspaper, Radar Malang, and Malang Post) to be very useful in introducing institutions / schools to the community, and (2) Research conducted by Oktavika Saputri (2013) with the title "Effects of Educational Services Quality of PAUD Institutions on the Level of Parent Satisfaction in Gunungpati District, Semarang City". The results of this study indicate that: (a) there is a positive relationship between the education quality of PAUD institutions and the level of parent satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ). (b) the quality of education of PAUD institutions has an influence of 65.2% on the level of parent satisfaction at PAUD institutions in the Gunungpati sub-district, Semarang City. [6], [7] Both studies indicate that customer satisfaction influenced by the marketing strategies and the quality of education services.

### 1.2 Marketing and Imaging Strategies

By standard definition, marketing is a social process where individuals and groups get what they need and want through the creation, offering, and free exchange of value of products and services with others. The purpose of marketing is to know and understand customers well so that they purchase the products or services offered. Marketing management is the process of planning and implementing concepts, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create customer satisfaction and loyalty. [8]

### 1.3 Positioning Strategy

Positioning is an attempt to influence the minds of consumers by offering schools/companies. Positioning aims to direct customers interested in the school offered, building trust in the eyes of consumers that the product (school) offered is indeed worthy of trust and quality. According to Kotler (2009, in Mulyana) positioning is the act of designing, offering companies and images to occupy a place that distinguishes in the minds of consumers. [9] Meanwhile, according to Hermawan Kartajaya, positioning is an effort to build and gain customer trust. The more credible the organization is in the eyes of the customer, the stronger the position of the organization. [10] In the world of education, the existence of positioning is beneficial for schools to convince prospective guardians of students to join the school offered. If the "school name" already has trust and credibility in the eyes of the guardians of students, it is possible emotionally, and they will also be close to our school. The existence of positioning will eventually become a symbol. It will act as a determinant for prospective guardians of students to join or not join the educational institution. Positioning must be unique and different from other schools, so prospective student guardians can easily differentiate themselves. In this case, schools have

the task of how to put the school's strategic positioning in the minds of prospective student guardians. [11]

#### 1.4 Differentiation Strategy

Differentiation can mean differences or carry out activities that are different from what others have done in order to strengthen the positioning and increase branding value. In the context of school marketing, the strategy used must be different from school marketing patterns in general. Differentiation will be able to bring excellent value to customers. Customers will feel satisfied and increasingly interested in the products offered. Maintaining differentiation can be done by focusing on core differentiation, consistent, and always strengthening differentiation from time to time. In this case, schools must be demanded to consistently create excellence continuously. [12] According to Kotler (2006), differentiation can through (1) products (features, performance, design), (2) service (speed, convenience, delivery time, empathy), (3) channel (channel coverage, work culture, skills). [13] By understanding differentiation and positioning, we will know the advantages and disadvantages of schools compared to other schools. The school offered must be able to show strengths and advantages so that it becomes a strong attraction for prospective student guardians.

#### 1.5 Branding Strategy

According to The American Marketing Association (in Mulyana, 2012), the brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or even a combination of these. To identify goods or service sellers or sales groups to differentiate from competing goods or services. Trademarks use to: (1) simplify product tracking, (2) organize inventory records, (3) legal protection, (4) signifies quality, (5) secure competitive advantage and barriers to competitors. As much as possible, the name of the school can be born into a new brand that can take and escort prospective student guardians to join. According to Montoya, branding can affect certain emotions, perceptions, feelings of customers. Thus, schools that want to be known, favorite, and much sought after by prospective guardians of students must have a clear identity (character, characteristics). [14], [15]

## 2 RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in community development activities. The community is directed to achieve better social, economic, and cultural conditions. So that the community is expected to be more independent with a better quality of life and well-being. The main characteristics of the method of community development are community-based, local resource-based, and sustainable. By developing training models and image management assistance (rebranding) is expected that the Raudhatul Athfal educational institution in Bali Province is more competitive and has a positive and superior image in the community.

#### 2.1 Technical Implementation of Activities

The implementation steps in this research service are:

1. Problem posing (problem exposure): in this activity carried out grouping and determining the problems faced by RA education institutions in Denpasar Bali. The problems faced by 20 RA institutions in Denpasar Bali are about how to develop competitiveness in the community, increase the quantity and quality of students, infrastructure following minimum service

standards, availability of adequate operational costs, and the welfare of teachers and staff.

2. Problem analysis: at this stage, the research team collected various information from 36 participants from 20 RA institutions in Denpasar Bali in order to obtain alternative solutions to the problems faced. Participants are divided into groups to inventory the problems they have been facing and brainstorm how to understand these problems.

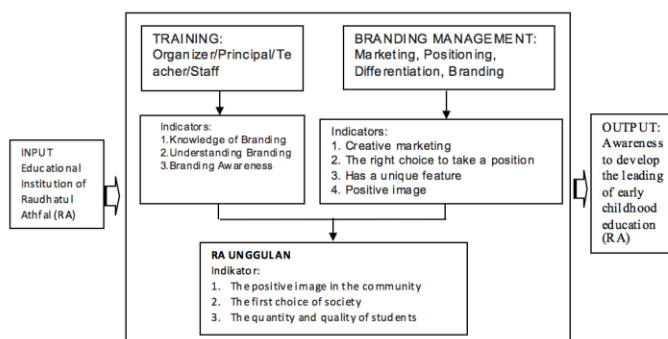
3. Determination of goals and objectives: at this stage, clear objectives for activities, both long-term and short-term goals, are determined. The long-term goal is to make a strategic plan (strategic plan). The short-term goal is to prepare a profile of the institution that will be offered to the public, how to take positioning, differentiation, and branding.

4. Actions: at this stage, the UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta community service research team conducted training activities in Realizing the Excellence Raudhatul Athfal (RA) Educational Institute Through the Development of a Branding Management Model for two days. This activity attended by 36 participants from 20 RA institutions in Denpasar, Bali.

5. Evaluation stage: at this stage, the research team evaluates the process of activities that take place so that the weaknesses and strengths of the activity program. In evaluating this activity, the participants felt enlightened, had knowledge and skills on how to develop superior and competitive school branding, how to position their institution in the community, how to differentiate school excellence compared to other institutions, and how to effective school marketing. The trainees hope that this activity will be followed up and monitored continuously to monitor developments so that they achieve the desired superior targets

#### 2.2 Model Development Flow Chart

The following is a diagram of a research service devoted to the development of a Model of Training and Assistance for Superior Management (Rebranding) for the Educational Institution of Raudhatul Athfal (RA) within the Ministry of Religion as follows:



**Figure 1.** Fish Bone Development of a Model for Training and Assistance in Superior Imaging Management of RA

Through training and branding management, it expects that the Raudhatul Athfal (RA) in Bali Province could become a leading Islamic early childhood education institution. So increasing its competitiveness, and become the first choice.

## 3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research was carried out on 28 and 29 October 2018 by the Research Team of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta collaboration with the Madrasah Education Section (Dikmad)



Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of the Province of Bali and Partners of "Mitra Amanah Kelola Sekolah" (MAKS) from Sidoarjo, East Java. This activity involving 36 participants from 20 representatives of RA education institutions in the Denpasar Bali region. This activity began with a presentation from the Research Team, followed by briefing and coaching by the Ministry of Religion's Regional Office of the Province of Bali. The Dikmad was encouraging madrassas to have competitiveness compared to schools in general. In Bali, the existence of the madrasa is a minority. Madrasa must learn a lot to develop themselves, make innovative breakthroughs so that they are superior and able to answer the needs of the community. According to Abu Siri, to become a leading RA institution, several things need to be done. (1) inquiry-based learning (students play an active role in the learning process). (2) RA must have a comprehensive writing program to train gross motor and exceptional motor students. (3) Subjects in RA are integrated subjects. (4) Schools have reading programs. (5) RA is a center for training children's confidence. (6) Incorporating aspects of Information Technology in learning. (7) Teaching English or Arabic while strengthening Mother's tongue. (8) RA activities should be through activities that are Hands-On (developing and discovering themselves). (9) Learning activities in RA should use centers. The training activities become an alternative to get ideas, develop insights, and get the motivation to initiate changes. Furthermore, the UIN Sunan Kalijaga Community Service Research Team conducted problem posing. In this activity, groups, and determination of the problems faced by RA education institutions in Denpasar, Bali. Some of the common problems faced by RA institutions in Denpasar Bali include how to develop competitiveness in the community, increase the quantity and quality of students, infrastructure following minimum service standards, availability of adequate operational costs, and the welfare of teachers and staff.



**Figure 2.** *Posing Problem*



**Figure 3.** *Problem Analysis*

Next is determining goals and objectives. Participants at this stage are trained to set clear organizational goals for both long-term and short-term goals. The long-term goal is to make a strategic plan. The short-term goal is to make a profile of the institution that will be offered to the public, how to take positioning, differentiation, and branding. At the end of the activity is the evaluation phase. At this stage, the UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta research team evaluated the process of activities. So that the program's weaknesses and strengths could identify and improvements could be made to the existing deficiencies. In evaluating this activity, the participants felt enlightened, had knowledge and skills on how to develop superior and competitive school branding, how to position their institution in the community, how to differentiate school excellence compared to other institutions, and how to effective school marketing. The trainees hope that this activity will be followed up and monitored continuously to monitor developments so that they achieve the desired superior targets. After conducting training activities and rebranding management assistance for Organizers, Principals, Teachers, or Staff of the Raudhatul Athfal (RA) institution in Denpasar, Bali, new insights and understandings obtain for the development of their respective institutions. Furthermore, each institution prepares a profile branding as in the following picture.

The next activity is to do a problem analysis. At this stage, the UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta research team with Muhammad Yusuf from the MAKS collected various information from 36 participants from 20 RA institutions in Denpasar Bali. In order to obtain alternative solutions to the problems faced. Participants divided into groups to inventory the problems that they have been facing and brainstorm how to understand these problems.



Figure 4. Awareness of building RA Branding in Denpasar Bali

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Rebranding management training and mentoring activities for Organizers, Principals, Teachers, and Staff at the Raudhatul Athfal (RA) educational institution within the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag) are essential and needed to build insight, awareness and mental attitude. With this training, most of the participants get insight to develop their institutions to be better, leading, competitiveness, and become the best choice. How to position the institution among other institutions. Which segment of the community will work? What are the advantages of graduates and the services that will offer? The Ministry of Religion can intensively conduct training and modern governance to develop education in the Madrasah. The RA community also needs to be benchmarked to more advanced early childhood education institutions to adopt and develop it into more advanced innovations. RA institutions need to network to share information so that cooperation can occur mutually beneficial. At the beginning and the end of the year, the RA management, principal, teachers, and staff should report to an evaluation. Develop a road map, make annual strategic plans, to superior programs that will be

implementing every the new of school year. Furthermore, each RA institution also needs to form an internal quality assurance unit to oversee programs to fit the agency's vision, mission, and goals.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The first author wish to thank LP2M and the Dean of Tarbiya and Teaching of the State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta that supporting funding for the Research. Also thanks to all member of observer team from PIAUD UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta Indonesia.

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