



Implementation of Superior Branding and Governance Strategies in Improving The Existence of Early Childhood Institutions (Study on KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani, Sukoharjo)

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ABSTRACT

This community service activity aims to increase the existence of KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani through the implementation of an integrated branding and superior governance strategy. The main problems of partners include weak school branding, limited promotion, conventional governance, and suboptimal community involvement and partnerships. The methods used are participatory, educational, and applicative approaches through the stages of socialization, training and workshops, mentoring, partnership collaboration, and monitoring and evaluation. The programs carried out include parenting activities, coloring competitions and trial classes, grand recitations and social activities, social media development, school governance assistance, and procurement of promotional media. The results of the activity showed an increase in school visibility, parental and community involvement, as well as improvements in a more professional and systematic governance system. The use of social media has also proven effective in expanding the reach of promotion and building a positive image of the institution. In addition, collaboration with various stakeholders strengthens the network's network and the sustainability of the program. Thus, the superior branding and governance strategies implemented are able to increase the existence and competitiveness of KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani. This service model can be a reference for other Early Childhood Education institutions in facing competitive challenges in the digital era.

Keywords: school branding, education governance, parenting, trial class, coloring competition.

1. Background

Early childhood education is an important foundation in shaping the quality of human resources from the early stages of development. Early childhood education institutions not only play a role in developing children’s cognitive aspects, but also form character, values, and social-emotional readiness that will affect the success of education at the next level. In this context, the existence of early childhood education institutions based on Islamic values has a strategic role in instilling religious values from an early age. However, the development of an increasingly competitive educational environment requires each institution to be able to adapt and improve its competitiveness, both in terms of educational services, management, and institutional marketing strategies.

KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani is one of the Islamic-based early childhood education institutions that has a vision to form a generation of Qur’ani who are intelligent and characterful. Although it has the value of excellence in terms of ideological and cultural aspects, this institution still faces challenges in maintaining its existence in the midst of competition with other early childhood education institutions that are more innovative and adaptive to the development of the times. One of the important indicators of the existence of the institution can be seen from the number of students enrolled each year.

The development of the number of students in KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani in the last five years can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of Play Group and Kindergarten Students of Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani

Levels	2022	2022	2023	2024	2025
Play Group	20	24	19	13	10
Kindergarten	16	18	24	10	14

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the number of students has fluctuated quite significantly. At the family planning level, there has been a sharp decline from 24 students to

10 students in recent years. Meanwhile, the kindergarten level also showed instability, with a drastic decline in certain years before returning to experience a slight increase. This condition indicates that the public’s attraction and trust in institutions has not been stable, so it requires the right strategy to improve the existence and sustainability of schools.

One of the main factors that affect this condition is the lack of optimal school branding strategy. Branding in the context of education is not only related to visual identity, but also includes the image, reputation, and public perception of the quality of services provided. Educational institutions that are able to build a strong branding will be easier to recognize and trust by the wider community. This is in line with the statement that marketing orientation in educational institutions is an important factor in increasing the attractiveness and sustainability of institutions (Shaikh & Kazmi, 2022). In addition, social media-based branding strategies have been proven to be able to strengthen the school’s image and increase stakeholder engagement more broadly (Eriani, Khamidi, Amalia, & Nursalim, 2025).

However, the conditions at KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani can be seen in figure 1 and figure 2, showing that the branding strategy is still conventional and has not been integrated with digital media. Promotion is still carried out on a limited basis through word-of-mouth communication, so the range of information becomes narrow. In fact, in the current digital era, the use of information technology is the main need in supporting the effectiveness of promotion and management of educational institutions. Strengthening the use of technology in school management practices and promotion can increase efficiency and expand access to information to the public (Rifai, Amalia, Indah, & Ifani, 2024). In addition, good digital literacy is also an important factor in supporting innovation and sustainability of educational institutions in the modern era (Sari, Winasis, Pratiwi, Nuryanto, & Basrowi, 2024).



Figure 1. Aisyiyah Cemani Kindergarten Building Figure 2. Learning in the classroom

In addition to the branding aspect, another problem that is no less important is the governance of institutions that are still conventional. The management of financial administration, reporting, and human resource management at KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani has not been systematically documented and has not utilized digital technology optimally. This condition has the potential to cause inefficiency, low transparency, and decreased public trust in the professionalism of the institution. In fact, good governance is one of the important indicators in creating accountable, transparent, and sustainable educational institutions (Xie & Lie, 2020). Digitalization in education governance has also been proven to be able to improve the quality of services and the effectiveness of school management (Selliseth, 2024).

On the other hand, the quality of education services is greatly influenced by the competence of teachers as the spearhead of learning. Early childhood education teachers are required to be able to present learning that is creative, innovative, and in accordance with children's psychological development. Strengthening teachers' professional identities and improving pedagogic competence are important factors in improving the quality of educational services (Ma & Hedges, 2024). In addition, parental involvement in the educational process also has a significant contribution to children's development. Good

interaction between teachers and parents can create a conducive learning environment and support optimal children's growth and development (Golan & Levi, 2025).

Another problem faced is the lack of optimal partnerships between institutions and the surrounding community, including Aisyiyah organizations, Muhammadiyah, and MSME actors. In fact, collaboration with various parties can be an effective strategy in strengthening networks, increasing public trust, and supporting institutional sustainability. In the context of modern education, synergy between schools and stakeholders is one of the keys in creating a strong and competitive education ecosystem.

Based on these various problems, an integrated strategic effort is needed to increase the existence of KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani. Strengthening digital-based branding, improving professional institutional governance, developing teacher competencies, and expanding partnerships are important steps that must be taken systematically and sustainably. Therefore, this community service activity is focused on the implementation of branding strategies and superior governance as an effort to increase the existence and competitiveness of Islamic-based Early Childhood Education institutions in the midst of increasingly complex educational competition dynamics.

Method

This community service activity uses a participatory, educational, and applicative approach designed to provide direct solutions to partner problems, namely KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani. A participatory approach is chosen so that all parties involved, both school managers, teachers, and organizational partners, play an active role in each stage of the activity, so that the results achieved are more relevant, contextual, and sustainable. Meanwhile, the educational and applicative approach aims to provide not only theoretical understanding, but also practical skills that can be directly implemented by partners.

The method of implementing activities consists of several stages that are integrated with each other, namely socialization, training and workshops, mentoring, partnership collaboration, and monitoring and evaluation according to figure 3. The initial stage began with socialization activities that aimed to provide understanding to all school stakeholders about the importance of branding strategies, superior governance, and improving the quality of educational services. Socialization is carried out through face-to-face meetings, interactive discussions, and the delivery of digital media-based materials, so that participants can comprehensively understand the urgency of the program.

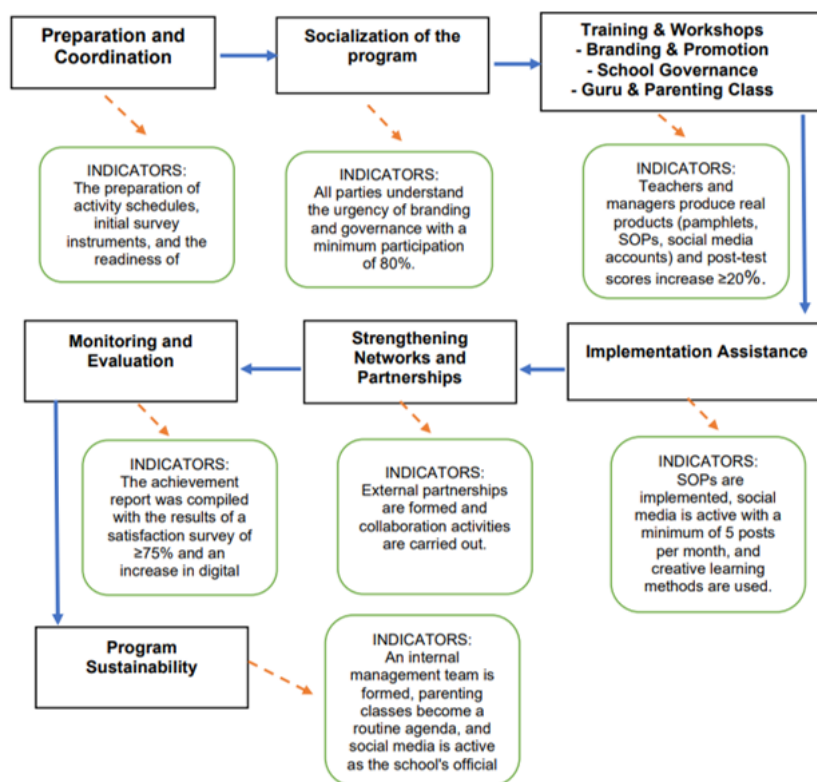


Figure 3. Service Flow Diagram

The next stage is training and workshops which are the core of service activities. At this stage, training was carried out related to strengthening school branding, managing digital promotional media, and increasing the capacity of institutional governance. This activity includes workshops on creating school visual identities such as signs, banners, and

pamphlets, as well as training on social media management such as Instagram, and TikTok as a means of digital promotion. In addition, training is provided in financial administration management, report preparation, and teacher human resource management through the preparation of a systematic Standard Operating Procedure. The training also

includes improving teachers' competence in character-based creative learning and the organization of parenting classes to increase parental involvement in the child's education process.

Furthermore, intensive assistance is carried out to ensure that the results of the training can be optimally implemented by partners. Assistance is carried out periodically through direct visits to schools, consultations, and monitoring of the implementation of branding and governance strategies that have been prepared. At this stage, the service team provides technical guidance in social media management, the implementation of administrative SOPs, and the implementation of creative learning methods in the classroom.

In addition, this activity also uses a collaboration and partnership approach by involving various external parties, such as the Pimpinan Ranting Aisyiyah (PRA), the Pimpinan Ranting Muhammadiyah (PRM), and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) around the Cemani area. This collaboration aims to strengthen the school's network, increase community support, and create a broader and more sustainable education ecosystem.

The final stage of the implementation method is monitoring and evaluation which is carried out on an ongoing basis to measure the effectiveness of the program. Evaluation is carried out through pre-test and post-test to measure the improvement of the competence of trainees, direct observation of the implementation of the program in the field, and satisfaction surveys for teachers and guardians. In addition, an evaluation was also carried out on the performance of school digital media through an analysis of the amount of content, interaction, and audience growth. The results of this evaluation are used as a basis for program

improvement and the preparation of sustainability strategies.

With this structured and comprehensive method, it is hoped that community service activities will not only have a short-term impact, but also be able to create a sustainable system in improving the existence, professionalism of governance, and the quality of educational services in KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani.

3. Results and Discussion

The implementation of community service activities at KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani is carried out through a series of integrated programs that focus on strengthening branding, improving institutional governance, developing the quality of educational services, and expanding the partnership network. In general, the results of the activity show an increase in institutional visibility, community involvement, and improvements in a more professional and structured school management system.

Parenting Activities

The parenting activity with the theme "Play, Learn, Grow: Appropriate Assistance for Early Childhood" was held on January 25, 2026 by presenting psychologists from the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta. This activity was attended by 82 parents who have children under the age of five. The material presented included the importance of stimulating children's development, proper parenting, and the role of parents in supporting children's learning readiness from an early age (Figure 4). During the activity, participants showed high enthusiasm, as seen from active interaction in question and answer sessions and case discussions related to daily problems in childcare.



Figure 4. Islamic Parenting

Apart from being a means of education, this parenting activity is also used as a medium for institutional promotion. In certain sessions, the service team and school management introduced the flagship program of KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani, including an Islamic value-based learning approach and children’s character development activities. With this approach, parents not only gain knowledge, but also build an emotional closeness to the institution. The results of the activity show that parenting classes are an effective strategy in increasing public trust and expanding the potential of prospective students.

Coloring Competition and Trial Class

The coloring competition and trial class activities were carried out involving 85 children divided into two age groups, namely 3–4 years and 5–6 years old (Figure 5). The coloring competition is designed to train children’s creativity and fine motor skills, while the trial class provides direct experience to children related to the learning atmosphere in Play Group/Kindergarten. Teachers facilitate activities with fun methods, such as playing while learning, the use of visual media, and active interaction between teachers and children.



Figure 5. Coloring Competition

Islamic religious gathering, People's Market, and Social Service

Islamic religious gathering, people's markets, and social services will be carried out on December 28, 2025 involving various parties, such as PCM Grogol, PRM Cemani, PRA Cemani, and the local government (Figure 6). This activity is packaged in the form

of an integrated event that combines religious, social, and economic aspects. The recitation presents speakers who provide *tausiyah* to the community, while the people's market involves local MSME actors, and social service in the form of distributing assistance to people in need.



Figure 6. Gathering, Study, People's Market and Social Assistance

This activity was attended by hundreds of community members, thus having a significant impact on increasing school exposure. In addition, the involvement of various stakeholders shows that there is a strengthening of partnerships that were previously not optimal. Schools are not only seen as educational institutions, but also as part of a community that is active in social activities. This strengthens the positive image of the institution and increases public trust in the existence of KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani.

Instagram Social Media Development

The development of Instagram social media is carried out by creating an official school account that functions as a publication and communication medium. Within three months, `kbt.k.ummahataisyiyah_cemani` account already had 403 followers and actively

published various school activities. The content created includes documentation of learning activities, parenting, competitions, and information on new student admissions.

School Governance Implementation Assistance

School governance assistance is carried out through a series of coordination with teachers and managers to identify the problems faced. This activity includes the preparation and implementation of Standard Operating Procedures in financial administration, reporting, and human resource management. Teachers are given training related to more systematic administrative recording and the use of simple technology such as spreadsheets.

The results of the activity showed an increase in teachers' understanding and skills in managing school administration. In addition, more organized governance has a

positive impact on institutional transparency and accountability, which ultimately increases public trust.

Procurement of Promotional Media

The procurement of promotional media is carried out through the creation of signboards, banners, and pamphlets with more attractive and informative designs. Signboards are installed in strategic locations to make it easier for the public to recognize the existence of the school, while banners and pamphlets are used as promotional media in various activities.

This promotional media is designed with a consistent visual identity, so that it is able to strengthen the institution's branding. The results of the activity show that the existence of physical promotional media has a significant impact on increasing the attractiveness of schools. It will be easier for the public to get information about the programs and advantages owned by KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani.

The results of all these activities show that the service program has been able to answer the main problems of partners, namely weak branding, limited promotion, and suboptimal institutional governance as identified at the initial stage. From this service, it is emphasized that branding strategies have an important role in improving the existence of educational institutions. Parenting activities, competitions, and social events show that a direct interaction-based approach is able to build public trust more effectively than conventional promotions. This is in line with the concept of marketing orientation in education which emphasizes the importance of long-term relationships with stakeholders (Shaikh, A. L., & Kazmi, 2022).

The use of social media as a means of digital branding has also been proven to be able to significantly increase the visibility of institutions. Social media allows for the wide and rapid dissemination of information, as well as increasing interaction with the public. These findings are in line with research that

states that social media-based branding strategies can strengthen school imagery and increase stakeholder engagement (Eriani, Khamidi, Amalia & Nursalim, 2025), and are supported by the importance of digital literacy in supporting educational innovation.

In the aspect of governance, the assistance carried out shows that increasing the capacity of managers in school administration and management has an impact on increasing the professionalism of the institution. The implementation of SOPs and a more organized administrative system can increase transparency and accountability. This is in line with research that emphasizes the importance of strengthening technology-based school management to increase management effectiveness (Iriansyah & Saryono, 2025).

Furthermore, improving the quality of education services through trial classes and parental involvement shows that the quality of interaction between teachers, children, and parents is an important factor in the success of early childhood education. This reinforces the importance of teacher competence in creating creative and fun learning (Wulandari, 2023), as well as the importance of collaboration between schools and parents (Sahira, Octoria, Sari, & Ahmad, 2025).

Strengthening partnerships through grand recitation activities and collaboration with various stakeholders also shows that external support has a strategic role in increasing the existence of institutions. This collaboration strengthens the social legitimacy of schools and expands their networks, as emphasized in research on the importance of synergy between schools and stakeholders (Jatmika, 2018).

Overall, the approach to service carried out is more comprehensive and integrated. Strengthening branding, governance, service quality, and partnerships is carried out simultaneously so that it has a significant impact on increasing the existence of KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani. This model can be a reference for other Early Childhood

Education institutions in improving the competitiveness and quality of educational services in the digital era.

4. Conclusion

Community service activities at KB/TK Ummahat Aisyiyah Cemani show that the implementation of superior branding and governance strategies in an integrated manner is able to increase the existence and competitiveness of early childhood education institutions. Through various programs such as parenting, coloring competitions and trial classes, grand recitations and social activities, strengthening social media, governance assistance, and providing promotional media, there has been an increase in school visibility, community involvement, and professionalism of institutional management. These results confirm that the combination of an experience-based promotion approach, the use of digital technology, strengthening the capacity of human resources, and collaboration with stakeholders are key factors in building public

trust and interest. Thus, a comprehensive and sustainable strategy is not only able to overcome the initial problems of partners, but also becomes a development model for other Early Childhood Education institutions in the face of competition in the modern era of education.

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