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Partnership Management between Early Childhood Education Institutions and Families through the Outbound Parenting Program at Wahana Kalimassada Purworejo

Irma Dwi Lestari¹, Abdul Aziz¹

¹ Nahdlatul Ulama Islamic College Purworejo, Indonesia

Email author: irmadudwilestari@gmail.com | azizsanje551@gmail.com

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Correspondence

Irma Dwi Lestari and Abdul Aziz
STAI Nahdlatul Ulama Purworejo
(085868447433)

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the management of partnerships between early childhood education (ECE) institutions and families through an outbound parenting programme operated by Wahana Kalimassada in Purworejo, Indonesia. It specifically explores programme implementation, partnership-supporting practices, and organisational constraints, while distinguishing participation in an event from evidence of sustained family engagement. **Methods:** The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with programme managers, principals of partner ECE institutions, and participating parents, as well as documentation. Data were analysed through reduction, display, and conclusion drawing, with source and technique triangulation. **Results:** The programme combines parent-child experiential activities, including bonding games, environmental activities, cultural workshops, and reflection, with service promotion and institutional relationship-building. The organiser describes a seven-element service marketing approach, communication through social media and word of mouth, and cooperation with multiple community actors. Reported institutional visits range from 26 to 28 per month; however, these figures describe service use rather than independently establishing repeat patronage or improved parent-school engagement. Internal coordination is managed through rotating assignments, communication, and a shared-team ethos. **Discussion:** The findings suggest that an external experiential-learning provider can function as an intermediary connecting ECE institutions and families. Nevertheless, the available account documents implementation more clearly than partnership planning, joint decision-making, or outcome evaluation. **Conclusion:** Outbound parenting offers a potentially useful operational setting for ECE partnership management, provided its educational objectives, institutional roles, and evaluation indicators are explicitly aligned. Further verification of participant-level and longitudinal evidence is needed before claims about programme effectiveness or partnership sustainability can be made.

Introduction

Early childhood education (PAUD) takes place in a network of nurturing, learning, and social interaction that goes beyond the classroom. Therefore, the quality of early childhood education services is not sufficiently understood from the pedagogical activities that occur in schools, but also from the ability of institutions to build communication and working relationships with families. The perspective of school, family, and community partnerships places these three environments as parties that share responsibility for the child's learning experience (Epstein, 2018; Aziz et al., 2021). At the practical level, family involvement requires more than parental attendance at an event; it demands opportunities to participate, understand children's developmental needs, and follow up on learning experiences in daily life.

Studies of preschool programs show that meaningful collaboration with families can be designed through activities that support parent-child relationships, communication, and children's social-emotional readiness. However, strategies for reaching out to families and maintaining sustainable participation remain important issues in their implementation (Bierman et al., 2023). The study of interinstitutional partnerships also reminds that cooperative relationships are not always equal: the division of roles, access to resources, and the orientation of each actor can affect the benefits received (Mu et al., 2023; Aziz et al., 2024). Thus, partnerships need to be treated as an object of institutional management, not just as a slogan for parental participation.

In early childhood management, partnerships include at least setting common goals, setting roles, implementing activities, and evaluating the quality of relationships and service achievements. Arifiyanti (2020) discusses early childhood learning programs shows the importance of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and involving related parties. The studies of Aziz et al. (2021) on learning management studies and Suryaningsih (2026) on the management of early childhood arts education also place managerial functions as important elements in the implementation of programs. However, the context of partnerships involving learning service providers from outside the school raises additional questions: who sets the goals, who is responsible for the quality of activities, and how is the school-family relationship assessed after the activities are completed?

One of the mediums of this encounter is outbound parenting, which is an outdoor activity that brings together children and parents in a shared learning experience. Outdoor learning provides space for multimodal activities, hands-on practice, and social and environmental experiences; these potential benefits still depend on the design, competence of facilitators, and the organization of activities (Aziz et al., 2022; Kiviranta et al., 2024). Therefore, the value of outbound parenting education is not automatically attached to the form of the game, but rather to the suitability of the activity with the learning objectives and the role of the family in it.

Wahana Kalimassada Purworejo, located in Sewayung Village, Purworejo District, Purworejo Regency, organizes outbound parenting for parents and children and establishes relationships with a number of PAUD institutions. These services include community games, environmental activities, skills, cultural introduction, and reflection. At the same time, managers use digital promotion, word-of-mouth communication (Aziz & Arina, 2021), and service management as part of the edupreneurship strategy. The case is interesting because Wahana Kalimassada is not a formal PAUD institution, but an external service provider that has the potential to be a liaison for activities between PAUD institutions and families.

The commercial dimension of educational services does not in itself conflict with pedagogical goals. The concept of educational marketing emphasizes the development of services based on user needs and the management of relationships with stakeholders (Kotler & Fox, 1995; Aziz & Munir, 2021). Although the study of Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) departs from higher education marketing, its findings

remind the importance of adapting the marketing concept to the character of educational institutions. In outbound parenting services, the critical question is whether the promotion and frequency of service use go hand in hand with the process of meaningful educational partnerships, or whether they only reflect the transaction of the service of the activity.

Departing from this problem, this study aims to describe the management of outbound parenting programs, analyze practices that facilitate partnerships between PAUD institutions and families, and identify the problems of coordination and evaluation that accompany them. The contribution of the paper lies in the managerial reading of out-of-school education service providers as intermediary actors in the PAUD-family relationship. The analysis is directed at the available empirical findings and distinguishes the activities carried out, the interpretation of the partnership relationship, and the impact claims that still require further evidence.

Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to understand the implementation of outbound parenting and the accompanying relational practices at Wahana Kalimassada Purworejo, Sewayung Village, Purworejo District, Purworejo Regency, Central Java. The research is directed at outbound service providers as the location of the study, with the relationship between managers, partner PAUD institutions, and parents of participants as the focus of meaning. In this framework, outbound programs are understood as service events that can bring together the interests of family education and institutional management.

The data sources of this research consisted of Wahana Kalimassada managers, heads of partner PAUD institutions, and parents of participants. Data were collected through participatory observation, semistructured interviews, and documentation. The use of different sources and techniques was aimed at looking at program practices from the perspective of the organizers, service user institutions, and participants' families. The reporting methods available have not detailed the number of informants, the time span of data collection, the criteria for assigning informants, and examples of research instruments. The limitations of this reporting are aspects that need to be complemented from the research record to strengthen the traceability of the procedure.

Data analysis refers to data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing according to Miles and Huberman (1994), with triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study are presented according to the realm of service organization, partnership activities, marketing communication, and team coordination. The grouping is a framework for presenting the findings that have been reported, not data collection or additional field coding. The description of the results is limited to the information available, without adding interview excerpts or undocumented impact measures.

Results

Outbound parenting program as a space for interaction between early childhood education, families, and service providers

The results of the study describe outbound parenting at Wahana Kalimassada as a service that combines educational, recreative, and reflective activities. The form of activities includes bonding activities, fun games, ice breaking, eco green activities, skills classes, cultural workshops, and reflection sessions. Parents and children are involved in joint activities, while PAUD institutions are present as institutions that connect participants with services outside the classroom. The structure of this activity shows that the rides are positioned not only as a playground, but as an organizer of shared learning experiences that can be used by PAUD institutions.

Institutionally, there are three groups of actors that can be distinguished from the description of the research. The vehicle manager prepares and runs the activity; the partner PAUD institution accesses services for educational activities; while the family is involved as participants in the learning experience. This distinction is important because the contractual relationship of services, school-parent relationships, and parenting interactions in activities are different relationships. The manuscript has not detailed who compiled the common goals, how the needs of the family were gathered before the activity, and how the school followed up after the activity took place.

Implementation of family involvement activities and opportunities

The activities described rely on direct participation. Togetherness games and cooperative activities provide a situation where parents and children communicate and complete tasks together. Environmental and cultural activities expand conversation materials and contextual learning, while reflection sessions are referred to as efforts to connect experiences with character building and emotional closeness. This description supports the conclusion that organizers provide opportunities for family interaction in the experiential learning process.

However, the available results did not show changes in parental behavior after the program, the quality of family communication over time, or the continuity of school-home cooperation. Therefore, the presence of participants in outbound activities was positioned as evidence of implementation and engagement opportunities, rather than as a direct measure of increased family engagement. The difference between participation opportunities and measurable impact is important so that the interpretation of the results does not go beyond the design and research data.

Service management, promotion, and interagency relations

The manager positions outbound parenting as a superior product in the experiential education service business. The manager describes the use of the 7P marketing mix, which includes products, prices, location, promotions, human resources, processes, and physical evidence. The most explicit empirical information concerns the type of service, rural location with the natural environment, promotional channels, service experience, and team role. The details of costs, service standard documents, and physical quality indicators have not been presented in a measurable manner.

Promotion is carried out through Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Snack Video, as well as word-of-mouth communication which is locally called viral gethok. The research also links the relationship with partner PAUD institutions with the trust of service users. In the context of partnership management, these communication channels can be read as infrastructure for maintaining relationships with institutions and families; but the number of uploads, promotional reach, registration conversions, and revisit rates have not been recorded in the manuscript.

Networking, intensity of visits, and internal coordination

The results of the study describe cooperation with a number of elements, namely the community, the media, business actors, the government, and cultural figures. The network is referred to as the Pentahelix collaboration in the field description, but analytically it is more accurately called a multi-stakeholder network, because the composition of the reported actors is not entirely identical to the Pentahelix configuration which usually includes academics. The available results do not provide an example of agreement or specific contribution of each element; therefore the existence of the network is interpreted descriptively, not as evidence of the formation of an established collaborative governance.

The reported data shows that the frequency of visits by educational institutions to Wahana Kalimassada is 26-28 visits per month. This figure is descriptive information about the intensity of service utilization, but it is not accompanied by a recording period, the number of unique institutions, or data on repeated

visits. Therefore, this figure is not enough to determine partner loyalty, let alone the impact of education on the family. These simple quantitative findings are still useful as an indication of service activities, as long as their interpretation is proportionally limited.

The challenge that was highlighted was coordination between management personnel. After experiencing competency development, some team members were described as more likely to carry out tasks independently, potentially reducing work cohesiveness. To overcome this, managers implemented shifting work arrangements, internal communication, and a "One Team One Vision" work culture. At the result level, this information indicates efforts to organize human resources; the effectiveness of these mechanisms has not been tested through team performance measures or service quality assessments by partners.

Table 1. Mapping of partnership management dimensions based on the evidence available in the manuscript

Dimensions	Indications in the manuscript	Evidence limits/verification requirements
Planning	The program is designed as an educational service for parents-children.	There are no documents of partner needs, shared goals, or agreed activity plans available.
Organizing	There are managers, early childhood education institutions that use services, family participants, and internal task sharing.	The mechanism for sharing responsibilities across agencies and cooperation agreements has not been detailed.
Implementation	Game, environment, culture, skills, and reflection activities are carried out in a participatory manner.	Details of schedules, frequency per institution, and teacher/parent involvement in the design are not yet available.
Evaluation	There were reports of 26–28 monthly visits and internal responses to coordination constraints.	There has been no measurement of revisits, systematic feedback, or the impact of family involvement.

Source: analysis of reported research findings; not additional observational data.

Discussion

Placing outbound parenting as a partnership management instrument

The findings show a different configuration of direct partnerships between schools and parents: family activities are facilitated by educational service providers outside the school. Therefore, the success of partnership management is not properly judged only by the content of the program or the popularity of the rides. There are at least two levels of management that need to be distinguished, namely the service relationship between Wahana Kalimassada and PAUD institutions, and the quality of educational partnerships between PAUD institutions and families. Both can support each other, but do not necessarily produce the same achievements.

In Epstein's (2018) perspective, partnerships involve responsibilities that intersect between the school, family, and community. In this case, the vehicle has the potential to mediate the encounter of the three environments through joint activities. However, a substantive partnership requires educational goals that can be discussed and assessed together. Thus, schools need to be positioned as designers of educational goals with families, not just as an activity package booker; while service providers need to explain achievements, safety procedures, parent-child facilitation, and pedagogical follow-up that schools can use.

The mapping in Table 1 shows inequality in the level of documentation. The richest aspects of implementation are described, while joint planning, inter-agency relationship management, and evaluation of results are relatively less visible. These findings do not mean that these functions are not carried out in the field; all that can be scientifically stated is that the written evidence is inadequate. The documentation gap actually opens up room for management improvement, for example through collaborative activity plans, role agreements, family feedback instruments, and post-activity follow-up monitoring.

From participant attendance to meaningful family involvement

Bonding, cooperation, and reflection activities provide opportunities for parents to directly experience the process of communication and learning with their children. This pedagogical potential is in line with the study of Kiviranta et al. (2024) regarding outdoor learning opportunities for holistic development and hands-on practical activities. However, the same study emphasizes the importance of pedagogical prerequisites and the competence of organizers. Thus, the assessment of the quality of outbound parenting must pay attention to what children and parents learn and how facilitators help connect activities with family life.

Bierman et al. (2023) show that preschool programs involving parents need to pay attention to support for interaction, communication, and parenting, not just the organization of activities. In the case of Wahana Kalimassada, joint activities can be read as the entrance to family involvement. However, to assess whether family engagement is increasing, more specific indicators are needed, such as the level of meaningful parental participation, the quality of post-activity reflection, follow-up at home, and communication with teachers. These indicators are development recommendations, not the results of current research measurements.

Edupreneurship, partner relationships, and service sustainability

The dimension of edupreneurship in this case can be seen from the ability to package educational activities into services offered to early childhood education institutions. Social media and word-of-mouth promotion function to reach users, while location, form of activity, and service experience are elements of the value proposition. The educational marketing framework of Kotler and Fox (1995) helps explain the importance of the suitability of service products to the needs of the user institution. However, the use of the marketing concept needs to be accompanied by caution so that economic measures do not replace the measure of educational quality.

Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka (2006) remind that the marketing framework adopted from the business sector requires adjustments to the character of education. Although their study focuses on higher education, the theoretical warning is relevant as a critical comparison, not as direct evidence of early childhood education practices. In outbound parenting, the number of visits shows the movement of services but does not directly inform satisfaction, retention, or sustainability of cooperation. To assess institutional loyalty, follow-up research at least needs to distinguish between first and second visits, as well as explore the reasons for institutions to re-choose certain services.

Managerially, business and educational orientations can potentially be brought together through the design of service quality that can be checked together by partners. Managers can document learning objectives, safety procedures, facilitator competencies, teacher involvement, and parental feedback; early childhood education institutions can prepare child development goals as well as follow-up plans in the classroom or at home. The scheme is positioned as a practical implication of the analysis, rather than a practice that has been verified to take place at Wahana Kalimassada.

Multi-stakeholder networking and traceable governance needs

The involvement of communities, media, business actors, governments, and cultural figures mentioned in the initial manuscript indicates the orientation of organizers to build cross-sectoral support. However, the use of the term Pentahelix needs to be limited because the categorization of actors presented differs from the makeup of academics, businesses, communities, governments, and media commonly used in the model. This inconsistency does not invalidate the role of cultural figures; rather, it demands an explanation of whether cultural elements are positioned within the community, as additional partners, or as adjustments to the collaborative framework.

The study by Mu et al. (2023) shows that multi-stakeholder partnerships also need to be studied from the perspective of the division of interests and the inequality of the position of actors. In the context of the PAUD program, these questions can be in the form of who determines the price and schedule, who has access to evaluation information, and the extent to which parents have a say in the service design. Because the source text does not contain a detailed cooperation agreement or actors' experiences, the discussion of multi-stakeholder governance in this study is still an identification of issues, not a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of collaboration.

Contributions, limitations, and subsequent research agenda

The contribution of this paper lies in the separation of three domains that are often mixed when outbound parenting is considered an early childhood education innovation: the management of service products, institutional partnership relationships, and family involvement in learning. The separation allows the same activities to be read through different indicators. A well-visited vehicle does not necessarily have well-documented inter-institutional partnerships; on the contrary, small activities can still be meaningful if they have a common goal and a clear educational follow-up.

The limitations of the research that can be identified from the manuscript are the lack of details of the number and selection of informants, the time of data collection, interview citations, examples of cooperation documents, and data on partnership evaluation or changes in parental involvement. The manuscript also does not show longitudinal evidence to assess the sustainability of the relationship. Therefore, generalizations and causal statements about the effectiveness of the program need to be avoided. Further research can combine tracing of partnership documents, observation of the collaboration process, interviews of teachers and families, and follow-up measurements to explain the relationship between the quality of management and the child's educational experience.

Conclusion

Outbound parenting at Wahana Kalimassada Purworejo shows the practice of experience-based educational services that bring together vehicle managers, PAUD institutions, and families in participatory activities. The available findings show the implementation of community games, environmental and cultural learning, service promotion through digital channels and communication between users, the development of multi-stakeholder networks, and efforts to overcome internal coordination constraints. From the perspective of PAUD management, the strength of this case lies in the role of external service providers as facilitators of encounters between schools and families.

However, conclusions about the quality of partnerships need to be limited. The number of monthly visits shows the intensity of service utilization, has not proven institutional loyalty or increased family involvement. Evidence on joint planning, division of responsibilities between parties, evaluation mechanisms, and post-activity follow-up is also not sufficiently unraveled. Therefore, the development of partnership management models through outbound parenting requires agreement on educational objectives, role documentation, and experiential evaluation and family follow-up. Further research with

more complete process and outcome data is needed to test the sustainability and educational contribution of the program more convincingly.

Declarations

Author Contribution Statement

Irma Dwi Lestari and Abdul Aziz contributed to the preparation of this article, starting from the formulation of the research concept, the development of a theoretical framework, the analysis and interpretation of the research results, to the preparation and refinement of the manuscript. Both authors have read, reviewed, and approved the final version of the article and are responsible for the integrity and scientific substance presented.

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Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study were obtained through observations, interviews, and documentation during the research process. Shareable research data is available through reasonable requests to the authors of the correspondence, while respecting the principles of confidentiality, privacy, and identity protection of the informant.

Declaration of Interests Statement

Both authors declare that they do not have any conflicts of interest, either financially, professionally, or personally, that could affect the process of research, analysis, interpretation of results, or the preparation of this article.

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