

Partnership Design: Madrasah Cooperation Strategy in Increasing Public Trust

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to describe cooperation strategies in increasing public trust in Madrasah. This research method is a descriptive study, with a qualitative research approach. This research was conducted at an institution located in the Probolinggo area, namely MTs Al-Hasyimi. Informant sources were obtained from the head of the madrasa, public relations and MTs Al-Hashimi teachers, while the data collection methods used were interviews, observations and documentation. The findings of this study outline that basically the community is the main consumer who uses madrasah services. However, there are some madrasahs that cannot show the qualities they possess to the public audience. This is where the role of partnership design strategies is used in an effort to collaborate with the layers of society so that strong trust grows from the community to the institution. The results showed that MTs Al-Hasyimi uses partnership design management to increase public trust in the institution, the management of partnership design is implemented by; planning, implementing cooperation strategies, controlling and evaluation. The focus of research is on how the activities intensified by Madrasah MTs Al-Hasyimi in forming relationships between the madrasah and the surrounding community in order to increase public trust.

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, madrasahs have an important role as an educational institution that not only focuses on academic aspects, but also the formation of students' religious character (Alam, 2021; Hassan, 2021; Zulkifli, 2020; Chuanchen, 2023; Hasanah & Hefniy, 2023). However, along with the increasing public demands on the quality of education, public trust in madrasahs often faces challenges (Rahmawati, 2021; Khan & Ahmed, 2022; Mohd Noor, 2021; Rusdi et al., 2022; Hamidah, 2023).

In some areas, madrasas are still considered inferior to public schools, although there are a number of madrasas that have shown excellence in academics and morals (Nasution, 2021; Fadhilah, 2020; Alwan & Shahrir, 2022; Ansori et al., 2023). This shows that collaboration between madrasas and the community is a crucial factor in increasing public trust (Fazira, 2022; Idris, 2020; Yusof, 2021; Maulidah et al., 2023; Sanjani, 2023).

Public trust in educational institutions is greatly influenced by the institution's ability to build good relationships with the community (Hassan et al., 2020; Abdullah, 2021; Smith & Thomas, 2022; Rusdi et al., 2022; Wijaya & Khoir, 2022). According to the open system theory, an educational institution such as a madrasah must be able to interact with its external environment to achieve success (Nasir, 2021; Mulder, 2020; Fadli & Halim, 2021; Norman & Paramansyah, 2024). Therefore, it is important for madrasas to design effective partnership strategies to increase community involvement in supporting the vision and mission of madrasah education (Ibrahim et al., 2022; Abdullah & Rahman, 2020; Harris, 2021; Susilawati & Astuti, 2022). This research is here to answer the need for a deeper understanding of how partnership strategies can affect the level of public trust in madrasas (Rahman & Aziz, 2022; Zainuddin, 2021; Paradise & Muhammad, 2020; Zaini, 2024).

The phenomenon found in the field shows that madrasas, especially in rural areas, have experienced a decrease in the level of public trust in the quality of education they offer. This is reflected in the student registration data that is decreasing every year, which indicates that there is public dissatisfaction with the madrasah. One of the factors contributing to this situation is the lack of effective communication between madrasas and the surrounding community, as well as the lack of community participation in the educational process. Field observations also show that the success of madrasas in regaining public trust is highly dependent on their ability to engage various elements of society, such as parents, community leaders, and community organizations. This condition is even more urgent because madrasas have a strategic role in shaping the next generation who have moral and academic integrity. Without an increase in public trust, madrasas will find it increasingly difficult to compete with other educational institutions that are more modern and have stronger resources.

Previous research has highlighted various aspects related to the collaboration of educational institutions and communities. Research by Zaini. (2023), found that digital engagement through social media is very effective in building a positive image of educational institutions among the wider community, especially in the current digital era. Firdaus & Muhammad (2020), underline the importance of implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) in ensuring the improvement of the quality of education.

By emphasizing transparency and effective communication between institutions and the public. Meanwhile, research by Zainuddin. (2021), shows that collaboration between teachers and parents can significantly increase students' motivation to learn, which ultimately strengthens the institution's reputation in the eyes of the community. Although these studies make an important contribution to the understanding of collaboration in the context of education, there are still gaps in research related to the implementation of more structured and planned partnership strategies, especially in the context of madrasas in Indonesia.

Based on a review of the literature, there is a clear gap in research related to the implementation of partnership strategies between madrasas and communities to increase public trust. Previous research has focused more on the role of digitalization or collaboration between parents and teachers within public schools, while integrated strategies between madrasas and community leaders, local organizations, and external institutions have not been widely discussed. This research seeks to fill this gap by exploring how partnership designs involving various elements of society can directly contribute to increasing public trust in madrasas. Filling this gap is not only important for the development of Islamic education management literature, but also to provide practical guidance for madrasas in Indonesia in developing more effective partnership strategies.

The novelty of this research lies in the comprehensive approach used to explore madrasah partnership strategies in increasing public trust. This study offers a new perspective by emphasizing the importance of involvement of community leaders and local organizations in partnership strategies, which has not been widely reviewed in previous studies. In addition, the study not only focuses on internal collaboration between teachers and parents, but also on how interaction with the external community can affect public perception of madrasas. Thus, this study makes a significant contribution in enriching the literature on education management in madrasas and offers a partnership model that can be adapted by other madrasas in various regions.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the partnership strategies implemented by madrasas in increasing public trust. This study seeks to identify the key elements in an effective partnership between madrasas and communities, and examine their impact on public perception of the quality of education in madrasas. This research also aims to provide practical recommendations for madrasas in designing and implementing more effective partnership strategies. The urgency of this research lies in its potential positive impact on the development of madrasas in Indonesia, especially in terms of strengthening their position as a competent and trusted educational institution in the eyes of the community.

METHOD

This research data was taken by applying qualitative descriptive research methods, Research that uses a qualitative approach the main data source is obtained from words and actions, the rest is additional data such as documents and others (Zainuddin, 2021). This research was conducted at a private madrasah institution, namely MTs Al-Hasyimi located in Kalidandan Village, Pakuniran District, Probolinggo Regency. Collection of information using observation and conducting interviews with related parties concerned. The processes or procedures carried out are; Observation to the place where the research took place, saw the conditions and conditions around the madrasah, interviewed several informants including; Head of Madrasah, Public Relations, Teachers and Guardians then documented the results of information obtained based on observations and interviews.

The data collection method uses documentation that is in accordance with the direction of research, then interviews, and in-depth observation. The data obtained by researchers from interviews and observations are then processed and combined. This has the aim of producing accurate data and able to be accounted for its authenticity. Data analysis is carried out from the start of the research until the preparation of the final research manuscript. The concept used in this study is *flow model analysis*, which is an analysis concept that includes the following stages; data display, conclusion making and differentiation (Wijaya, 2020).



Figure 1. Flow model *analysis*

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that; Management of Sister Schooling: Madrasah Cooperation Strategy in Increasing Public Trust in MTs Al-Hasyimi is carried out as follows:

Planning

Careful planning to get satisfactory results is at the core of a successful program. In managing the partnership design, madrasah plans what steps must be applied in implementing the cooperation strategy that will be carried out by the institution in order to increase public trust in the institution. At this planning stage, the composition of activities to be carried out in collaborating with certain parties is clear and recorded, as expressed by the head of the MTs Al-Hasyimi madrasah who said, to carry out a cooperation strategy with efforts to increase public trust in the institution, we held an internal meeting with all institutional stakeholders to discuss what is needed in conducting The cooperation, then cooperation with any party and then what implications the institution obtains by establishing the cooperation.

In line with the head of the madrasah, one of the teachers also said, in collaborating with related parties who are considered able to increase public trust in the institution, the institution has planned to prepare all administration and media that can support the cooperation activities to be carried out. We also prepare MOUs and MOAs to support the formalities of cooperation carried out, especially to formal parties.

MTs Al-Hasyimi is one of the tsanawiyah madrasahs that has implemented a cooperation strategy to increase public trust, a practice that has been maintained from the leadership of the previous madrasah administration to the current one, evolving since 2014. Several cooperation plans have been established with various parties, including:

Table 1. Partnership Elements in Madrasah Cooperation Strategy

Partnership Element	Role in the Cooperation Strategy
Community Leaders	Community leaders promote the madrasah through recommendations and involvement in events like Islamic holidays, Mawlid, and Isro' Mi'raj.
Parents/Guardians	Parents participate in quality improvement programs and student development initiatives (parenting, seminars, child development reports). They also help with madrasah branding through word-of-mouth, and take part in celebrations and student programs.
Committees	Committees, consisting of parents and community members, help publicize the madrasah's advantages and act as influencers to attract public interest. They are involved in planning new programs and internal meetings.
Community Organizations	Community organizations (village heads, midwives, police, public health centers) collaborate with the madrasah to widen its reach and trust by participating in educational and extracurricular activities.

From the series of programs that have been planned, the madrasah will arouse public trust gradually, if the cooperation can be realized properly, the madrasah can rise again because the madrasah has been able to increase public trust so that the quality and quality of the madrasah will increase as well as the increasing enthusiasts or students.

It is undeniable that community involvement has a considerable role for the development of an educational institution in the present and the future. A madrasah can be said to be successful if it is able to gain the trust of the community. After all, education is a shared responsibility between parents, madrasahs and the community (Riyadi et al., 2021) The community is the environment and the main customer for educational institutions, all students in educational institutions come from the surrounding community (Sukmawati & Herawan, 2016). Therefore, the community is an important asset in building the welfare of the world of education.

Good cooperation, an institution will have more strength to face several challenges, because strong cooperation will form a solid team in developing the interests of madrasah (Saleha et al., 2022). If you already have a solid cooperation relationship, it will be easier for the institution to increase public trust in the institution. Careful planning of the cooperation program is able to prepare the needs needed in implementing the cooperation program. Not only that, with planning, madrasah can also see the impact or temporary results that will be obtained if the program can run as expected.

Implementation of Cooperation Strategy

Community participation does not occur automatically, especially in developing countries, including Indonesia. This is because many residents do not understand the meaning of educational institutions, especially if their socioeconomic conditions are fairly low" (Fadhli, 2017). This is one of the targets of madrasahs to involve cooperation. In a madrasah there is already a public relations waka or better known as public relations, the involvement of public relations is important to improve the quality of the institution by establishing cooperation with the community. Public relations is tasked with inviting and fostering knowledge to the community (Fazira & Mirani, 2019).

In implementing the cooperation strategy carried out by the MTs Al-Hasyimi madrasah, namely by involving public relations waka, as revealed by the head of MTs Al-Hasyimi that public relations become an intermediary for us educational institutions to see the condition of the community around the madrasah, by engaging in the community directly, public relations are able to provide information to the institution about the needs desired by the community.

Also emphasized by MTs public relations Al-Hasyimiyang stated that we have a role and responsibility for the project to build people's self-awareness of the importance of their contribution to the world of education. Therefore, education public relations have a target environment around the madrasah, on how to manage it so that it actively participates in directed education development. In addition, educational public relations also bear the responsibility for the good impression of an educational institution by the surrounding community to gain trust and dismiss negative news that may occur. Furthermore, public relations are an opening for the community's desire for the advancement of education by communicating input to madrasahs, so that madrasahs can fix the visible shortcomings for the continuity and smooth process of education effectively.

There are five roles of public relations for educational institutions, namely: 1) Fostering harmonious relations with the internal public (within educational institutions, such as: lecturers / teachers, administrative staff and students), and relations with external public (outside educational institutions, such as: parents of students, and outside educational institutions). 2) Fostering two-way communication to the internal public (lecturers / teachers, employees, and students / students) and the external public (external institutions / agencies, the community, and mass media) by disseminating messages, information and publication of research results and various policies that have been set by the leadership. 3) Identify and analyze an opinion or various problems, both in educational institutions and in the community. 4) Ability to listen to desires or aspirations contained in society. 5) Be skilled in translating leadership policies well (Isbianti, 2010).

That way the role of education public relations management is to develop harmonious relations between madrasah and the community, increase progress and community understanding of their importance to educational institutions, create a sense of shared responsibility for the advancement of the world of education. So, it is appropriate for madrasah to involve public relations as an intermediary in establishing good cooperation with the community in increasing public trust.

Furthermore, it was revealed by one of MTs Al-Hasyimi teachers that the performance of public relations in supporting management in educational institutions in achieving the target goals that have been planned together depends on the ability to utilize the resources owned by educational institutions and can attract caring attitudes to contribute to developing the educational institution. In order to achieve the success of public relations management results, educational institutions should design strategies in the field of public relations.

The following is a cooperation strategy involving public relations performance imposed by the MTs Al-Hasyimi madrasah:

Cooperation with Community Leaders

By involving local community leaders, madrasah can be helped, especially in terms of finding new students. Community leaders can promote madrasah information to the wider community. Through activities held such as recitation, sarwa and when silaturrahim to neighbors both in the surrounding village environment and outside the village and even outside the sub-district.

Guardian

While the participation of parents as a strategy used by MTs Al-Hasyimi by forming a parent-group with various programs that have been planned and structured, the structural pattern is neatly arranged by forming a chairman, secretary and treasurer, in the formation of the MTs Al-Hasyimi group also provides decrees to all administrators with their respective tupoksi. Some of the tupoksi that have been running involving the community include; The group is responsible for managing student infaq, the group makes planning and managing activities outside KBM (final class graduation events, art performances, parades and Out Bond), the group also has the responsibility to promote the institution to external parties with a process that has been agreed upon by the madrasah cuttingholder.

In improving cooperation or cooler called partnership design, the institution also provides training to all parents by involving the management of the Al-Hasyimi MTs community such as; training, seminars and workshops. Parents also play an important role during report card acceptance meetings, special meetings such as when madrasahs hold religious holidays, final class graduation, as well as the participation of parents by giving word of mouth to neighbors about the institution so that it can have positive implications for the institution.

Expressed by one of the parents who stated, we are very proud and enthusiastic to contribute directly in advancing the MTs Al-Hasyimi madrasa. We have been given more trust by the head of the madrasah and all components of the madrasah to participate in several madrasah activities, so that we can find out the extent of our children's development in carrying out education in this institution and find the best solution to stimulate the development of our children through cooperation carried out by teachers and parents.

Madrasah Cooperation Relationship with Madrasah Committee

The madrasah committee is a forum whose members consist of parents, the surrounding community, educational institutions and the community. Representatives of madrasah councils serve as a bridge between madrasahs and communities to address BOS fund management issues and involve committees.

Madrasah always involves committees at internal madrasah meetings to accommodate opinions, ideas and constructive input on the progress of the madrasah. The involvement of the committee is considered very helpful because the committee also contributes to thinking about innovations that can maintain the quality of madrasah and can strengthen public trust in madrasah

Cooperation with Community Organizations

As a state institution, MTs Al-Hasyimi also collaborates with community organizations. By having connections like this, it is hoped that MTs Al-Hasyimi madrasah can be easier to get good support and feedback from its environment.

There are several community collaborations as revealed by one of MTs Al-Hasyimi teachers including: Cooperation with village heads and their tools, to provide understanding to students about the performance of village government and cooperation in the field of fulfilling madrasah facilities and infrastructure through village assistance. Furthermore, cooperation with village midwives and puskesmas: to find out the growth and development of students. then Cooperation with the sector police (polsek) in order to introduce students to the tasks carried out by the police.

The narration of the head of the madrasah stated that in every collaborative activity carried out by MTs Al-Hasyimi the madrasah also involves the role of social media to publicize activities to the wider community so that the public knows the programs carried out by the madrasa. The increasingly sophisticated era makes people's lives inseparable from the use of technology. This is the opportunity for MTs Al-Hasyimi to introduce the public to their services more broadly to the public.

With the implementation of the partnership design management strategy involving public relations by MTs Al-Hasyimi d can attract the attention of the public to participate in enlivening and advancing education in the area which can be seen in the increase in students every year to choose MTs Al-Hasyimi as a favorite madrasah in the paiton region. The point is that the strategy above is carried out to find a good relationship between educational institutions and the community, so that cooperation occurs for the advancement of education.

Controlling and evaluation

The next stage is to find out that the management of the partnership design program runs smoothly in accordance with the objectives, the madrasah conducts control and evaluation, control ensures that each component assigned the task according to the tupoksi has carried out its duties, the results obtained from the cooperation are in accordance with the standard goals to be achieved, and there are no mistakes or mistakes that will cause negative opinions before being published to outside (Zahroh, 2015).

Meanwhile, program evaluation is carried out in knowing an objective and systematic assessment of an intervention that is planned, ongoing or completed (Zamroni et al., 2021) Evaluation can also be interpreted as a series of activities comparing the realization of inputs, outputs, and outcomes against plans and standards. Evaluation results are obtained during monitoring activities. Moreover, evaluation also assesses the results or products that have been produced from a series of programs as a basis for making decisions about the level of success that has been achieved and the next actions needed.

One of the MTs teachers Al-Hasyimi said things that were controlled and evaluated in the cooperation program carried out with several parties were; Regarding the program in each component whether it has been running or there are obstacles, the effectiveness of the program on students and the development of the quality of madrasah and the results obtained from the program that has been running. In conducting control and evaluation, the madrasah involves parties from foundations, supervisors and committees to assess activities that have been running, all findings are used as guidelines to take the next steps that can improve the program.

The head of the school emphasized that the control and evaluation carried out by both the institution and the foundation are able to predict failures and are able to minimize program failures. However, so far there are no significant problems in carrying out all cooperation programs for all parties, there is only one obstacle, namely in facilitating the facilities and infrastructure of activities that sometimes still look for donors, but this does not hinder the sustainability of the programs being run. Controlling and evaluation are able to provide solutions to madrasahs to monitor the sustainability of the program and correct or complete inequalities that can hinder the program by finding solutions together.

The results of this study show that the partnership strategy implemented by MTs Al-Hasyimi is effective in increasing public trust through a collaborative approach with various parties, such as community leaders, parents, and local organizations. However, when compared to previous studies, there are some differences in interpretation and approach. Research by Zaini, (2020, 2023) emphasizes the importance of digitalization in managing relationships with the community to improve the image of educational institutions, in contrast to MTs Al-Hasyimi which still relies on conventional methods such as direct meetings and cooperation with community leaders without emphasis on digital technology. In addition, Hamidah, (2023) said that the Total Quality Management (TQM) approach is the key to improving the quality of educational institutions through strict and continuous supervision, while this research focuses more on social relations.

Public trust as the main factors in improving the quality of madrasas. Research conducted by Zaini, (2024) also found that direct community involvement does not necessarily increase public trust if it is not supported by clear transparency and accountability from the madrasah. Therefore, while this study supports the importance of partnerships, the results place more emphasis on social aspects and emotional connections than on quality management and transparency emphasized by previous studies.

This research makes a theoretical contribution by enriching the literature on educational partnership management, especially in the context of madrasas. The findings that partnership strategies involving communities, parents, and local organizations can increase public trust support the theory of the importance of external collaboration in improving the quality of educational institutions. In addition, this study adds insight into the importance of building trust through intensive social relationships in the madrasah environment, which has rarely been reviewed in previous literature. From a practical point of view, the results of this study can be applied by other madrasas in Indonesia, especially in rural areas, to increase public trust through planned and structured partnership strategies. Madrasas can apply a similar approach, by strengthening the role of community leaders and parents in educational activities, as well as increasing community involvement in the evaluation and development process of madrasah programs, which can ultimately have a positive impact on increasing the number of students and the quality of education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the strategy carried out by MTs Al-Hasyimi to collaborate with the community in improving the quality of education is to plan, namely, planning related to the program to be implemented and cooperation with related parties by preparing MOU and MOA. Furthermore, the implementation of the Cooperation strategy is to carry out a Cooperation strategy involving madrasah public relations as intermediaries to find out the needs and desires of the community and run the Cooperation program according to the agreement of the madrasah and related parties. Finally, controlling and evaluating the current program by involving the foundation, supervisors and madrasah committees to maintain program stability and improve ineffective programs.

The interweaving of cooperation is implemented by; Involvement of public relations to the community by approaching local community leaders, collaborating with parents, collaborating with madrasah committees, collaborating with community organizations. Then publish all activities by utilizing social media so that the public knows the madrasah program.

Implications that are parole with the management of sister schooling; The Cooperation strategy is able to increase public trust which is seen in the increase in students every year at MTs Al-Hasyimi. It can be understood that the cooperation program carried out by the MTs Al-Hasyimi madrasah is classified as successful but the strategy carried out cannot be applied to all institutions that have the same case because this strategy is carried out by looking at the characteristics and culture that exist in the madrasah environment, therefore researchers hope that there will be further research that can deepen understanding of the management of sister schooling; partnership strategies in increasing public trust.

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