

STRENGTHENING CONSUMER ANALYSIS AND CONVENTIONAL MARKETING STRATEGIES AT PONDOK PESANTREN AL-AMIN, BERINGIN VILLAGE

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received:

26 May 2026

Revised

05 June 2026

Accepted:

07 June 2026

Online available:

07 June 2026

Keywords

Consumer Analysis,
Conventional
Marketing, Islamic
Boarding School,
Community Service,
Marketing Strategy.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin in Beringin Village faces challenges in attracting new students. Promotional methods remain passive, relying on word-of-mouth without structured market analysis. This community service activity aimed to strengthen the pesantren's capacity in consumer analysis and conventional marketing strategies.

Methods: The activity was conducted through participatory training and direct mentoring, involving seven pesantren administrators. Methods included material presentation, group discussions, and guided practice in consumer profiling and marketing planning. Evaluation used observation and review of outputs produced by participants during the mentoring sessions.

Results: Participants collectively identified three priority consumer segments and developed five conventional marketing strategies: alumni testimonials, community leader outreach, flyer distribution, religious gatherings and open house events, and parents' recommendation networks. **Conclusion:** The activity facilitated participants' ability to conduct consumer analysis and formulate conventional marketing strategies. Sustained mentoring is recommended to support implementation.

Conclusion and suggestion: The activity contributed to improving participants' understanding of consumer analysis and conventional marketing strategies, as evidenced by the outputs produced during the mentoring sessions. Sustained mentoring is recommended to support implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin in Beringin Village, an Islamic educational institution established since 2000, faces challenges in maintaining student enrollment. Based on preliminary information, the number of students over the past three years has stagnated, indicating obstacles in attracting prospective students and parents. This challenge is common for many Islamic educational institutions in rural Indonesia, particularly in responding to shifting community preferences (Rokimin et al., 2022). The paradigm shift in how society views education demands that institutions function not merely as social entities but also as capable marketers of educational services (Alfiyanto, 2020). The community now assesses not only academic aspects but also moral, cultural, and spiritual values offered by institutions.

The main problem at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin is the limited understanding of prospective student profiles and parents' priorities, as well as ineffective communication of the pesantren's messages. Promotional strategies remain passive, relying solely on word-of-mouth without structured market analysis. Deep understanding of educational consumers, prospective students and their parents is crucial for institutional sustainability and relevance (Al-Nuaimi & Al-Ghamdi, 2022). Conventional marketing strategies utilizing social networks and community communication are promising, provided they are targeted.

Research demonstrates that integrity-based antecedents, reputation and social responsibility are more effective in driving consumer trust than reliability-based factors (Khamitov et al., 2024). This has important implications for pesantren, where reputation and community trust serve as primary capital. A good reputation, shaped by teaching quality, educator professionalism, learning environment, and graduate outcomes, increases parents' confidence (Wahidah et al., 2024). Trust arises from the belief that the institution can effectively educate and guide children according to parents' expectations (Anwar & Imam, 2024). Trust and reputation are mutually reinforcing, creating competitive advantages (Aziz & In'am, 2024). However, there remains a gap regarding how consumer analysis and conventional marketing principles can be practically applied in rural Islamic boarding schools to increase attractiveness and enrollment.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a useful framework for understanding parents' enrollment intentions. Hael et al. (2025) found TPB is the most frequently used framework in consumer behavior research. TPB proposes that behavioral intention is influenced by attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the pesantren context, parents' intention to enroll their children is shaped by attitudes toward the pesantren, perceived social pressure from community members, and perceived ability to afford fees and access the institution. Schiebler et al. (2026) demonstrated through meta-analysis that assimilation effects, where higher expectations lead to higher satisfaction reinforce the

importance of managing community expectations through consistent and trustworthy communication.

Based on these problems and research gaps, this community service activity aimed to: (1) enhance administrators' understanding of consumer analysis in the educational context, (2) assist in identifying profiles and preferences of prospective students and their parents, and (3) formulate conventional marketing strategies appropriate to the Beringin Village community. The approach employed participatory training and direct mentoring to equip administrators with practical skills in analyzing markets and designing effective marketing strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This community service activity is grounded in several foundational theories that provide the conceptual basis for understanding how educational institutions can strengthen marketing capacity to achieve sustainable growth.

Understanding consumer behavior is fundamental to developing effective marketing strategies. In the educational context, "consumers" refer to prospective students and their parents as primary decision-makers. Consumer behavior theory posits that purchase decisions are influenced by psychological, social, and cultural factors (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In choosing educational institutions, parents' decisions are shaped by rational considerations and emotional factors.

The TPB (Ajzen, 1991) provides a robust framework for understanding enrollment intentions. TPB proposes that behavioral intention is predicted by three components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Hael et al. (2025) found TPB is the most frequently used theoretical framework in consumer behavior research. This theory is relevant to understanding parents' intentions to enroll children in pesantren, as decisions are shaped by attitudes toward Islamic education, social pressure from community members, and perceived ability to afford and access the institution.

Trust is critical in understanding consumer behavior in educational contexts. Khamitov et al. (2024), in their meta-analysis of 50 years of consumer trust research, found that integrity-based antecedents, including reputation, ethicality, and social responsibility are more effective in driving consumer trust than reliability-based factors. This has profound implications: building a reputation for integrity and genuine care for students' welfare is more powerful in attracting families than merely demonstrating operational reliability.

The relationship between reputation and trust in educational institutions is well-documented. Wahidah et al. (2024) found that a school's reputation significantly influences parents' decisions. Parents feel more confident entrusting children to institutions already well-known in the community. This trust is built through tangible actions and consistency in service delivery (Anwar & Imam, 2024). Aziz & In'am (2024) emphasized that trust and reputation are mutually reinforcing, creating competitive advantages not easily imitated.

Schiebler et al. (2026) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of expectancy-disconfirmation research, examining the relationship between expectations, perceived performance, and consumer satisfaction. Their findings revealed a strong assimilation effect, where higher expectations are associated with higher satisfaction. This has important implications: managing community expectations through consistent, transparent communication is essential for ensuring satisfaction among parents and students.

Theory of Change articulates how interventions produce desired outcomes (Weiss, 1995). This activity's underlying logic is that providing pesantren administrators with knowledge and practical skills in consumer analysis and marketing will equip them to attract prospective students, leading to increased enrollment and institutional sustainability.

OECD DAC Criteria (OECD, 2019), relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability provide structured assessment for development interventions. This intervention demonstrates relevance by addressing a genuine need, effectiveness through participants' demonstrated ability to formulate strategies, and sustainability depending on implementation commitment.

Previous studies have examined marketing in educational institutions, particularly Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Rokimin et al. (2022) found that educational institutions require marketing strategies to satisfy stakeholders. Alfiyanto (2020) emphasized that institutions must understand consumers deeply, considering moral, cultural, and spiritual values. Ajetunmobi & Laobangdisa (2024) confirmed that socio-cultural factors significantly influence educational consumer behavior, particularly in rural areas with strong social ties. Hastasari et al. (2022) found that Islamic boarding schools still rely heavily on direct communication and personal approaches. Xu et al. (2022) found that conventional marketing channels can still influence consumer decisions in certain contexts.

Previous studies have provided valuable insights, but several gaps remain. First, limited research exists on applying consumer analysis and marketing strategy in rural Islamic boarding schools, as most studies have focused on urban institutions. Second, limited attention has been given to participatory approaches that build institutional capacity rather than providing external support. Third, the integration of consumer trust and reputation theories with practical marketing strategy in educational contexts has been underexplored. This activity addresses these gaps by employing participatory training and mentoring to build sustainable capacity at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin.

The theoretical framework integrates consumer behavior theory, trust and reputation theory, and social impact frameworks to provide a comprehensive conceptual basis for the intervention.

The central theoretical premise is that enrollment decisions are fundamentally shaped by trust in the institution and its reputation. Khamitov et al. (2024) finding that integrity-based antecedents are stronger drivers of trust than reliability-based factors provides the theoretical

foundation. Building and maintaining a reputation for integrity, demonstrated through ethical conduct, genuine care for students, consistent delivery, and community engagement is more important than merely demonstrating operational efficiency. This insight guides marketing strategy development, emphasizing community relationships and authentic communication.

The expectancy-disconfirmation framework (Schiebler et al., 2026) complements this by highlighting the importance of managing community expectations. Higher expectations are associated with higher satisfaction, but only if met or exceeded. Pesantren must communicate offerings transparently and consistently, ensuring services align with community expectations.

The TPB (Ajzen, 1991) identifies three factors shaping enrollment intentions: (1) attitudes toward outcomes of enrollment; (2) subjective norms from family, community leaders, and religious figures; and (3) perceived behavioral control regarding affordability, accessibility, and compatibility with family needs. This framework guides the intervention's focus on understanding how these factors operate in Beringin Village. Segmentation strategies address specific attitudes, norms, and control perceptions of different consumer groups.

The Theory of Change articulates the causal pathway: Inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, impact. Previous evaluations have demonstrated the effectiveness of participatory training in improving organizational performance. Rokimin et al. (2022) found structured marketing approaches contributed to improved stakeholder satisfaction. Alfiyanto (2020) identified institutional culture, leadership commitment, and stakeholder engagement as critical success factors. Wahidah et al. (2024) found that reputation significantly influences enrollment decisions. Khamitov et al. (2024) and Schiebler et al. (2026) provided broader evidence that trust and expectation management are crucial in consumer decision-making.

This activity contributes practically by providing Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin with enhanced institutional capacity for consumer analysis and marketing strategy, expected to contribute to increased enrollment and sustainability. In knowledge terms, it contributes to the limited literature on marketing capacity building in rural Islamic boarding schools, providing insights into applying consumer analysis and conventional marketing concepts in this specific context.

RESEARCH METHODS

This community service activity employed a participatory action research approach, combining training and direct mentoring to strengthen the capacity of Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin administrators in consumer analysis and conventional marketing strategies.

This activity utilized a mixed-methods design with a primarily qualitative orientation, incorporating participatory observation and document analysis. The research design followed a participatory action research (PAR) approach, emphasizing collaboration between researchers and practitioners in identifying problems, developing solutions, and evaluating outcomes

(Coghlan, 2023). PAR was selected because it enables active participation of beneficiaries, ensuring strategies developed are contextually appropriate and institutionally owned.

The design incorporated case study methodology, focusing on a single institution to gain in-depth understanding of specific challenges and opportunities. The intervention consisted of three stages: (1) needs assessment and participant identification, (2) participatory training and mentoring sessions, and (3) evaluation of learning outcomes and outputs produced.

The activity was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Hall, Beringin Village, on Tuesday, July 1, 2025. The setting was chosen because it represents the institution's primary community engagement space and provided a familiar environment for participants.

Beringin Village is characterized by a rural community with strong social ties and religious values. The village's rural characteristics, limited access to formal marketing media, reliance on interpersonal communication, and strong community networks influenced the intervention design. Islamic boarding schools in rural areas face unique marketing challenges due to limited resources and reliance on traditional communication channels.

While the one-day format limited depth, previous studies demonstrate that even short interventions can produce meaningful improvements when well-structured and participatory (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The target beneficiaries were seven administrators of Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin, including the pesantren leader, new student admissions section, public relations section, and teacher representatives. These individuals were selected because they represent key decision-makers and implementers of marketing activities.

The manageable participant size allowed for individualized attention and mentoring during practical sessions. According to Khamitov et al. (2024), understanding specific context and stakeholders is critical for developing effective trust-based marketing strategies.

A purposive sampling strategy was employed, selecting participants based on their roles in admissions, public relations, and institutional leadership. Sampling criteria were: (1) holding a formal administrative role, (2) directly involved in student recruitment, (3) having regular contact with prospective families, and (4) available for the full intervention. Purposive sampling was appropriate as it enabled working with individuals best positioned to implement and sustain marketing strategies (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Multiple instruments captured both immediate learning outcomes and potential for longer-term impact.

Observation Protocol: A structured observation protocol documented participants' engagement, understanding, and skill development. Indicators included: (1) participation in discussions, (2) ability to identify consumer segments, (3) quality of questions and contributions, (4) engagement with practical exercises, and (5) collaborative interaction. Observations were recorded by two non-facilitating research team members using checklists and narrative notes.

Document Analysis: Systematic review and evaluation of participant outputs assessed quality and completeness. Documents analyzed included: (1) consumer profiles, (2) segmentation matrices, and (3) marketing action plans, evaluated for completeness, relevance, and alignment with training concepts.

OECD DAC Criteria Assessment: The OECD DAC criteria, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability provided a structured framework for assessing intervention quality (OECD, 2019). Data collection employed multiple methods to provide triangulation (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The research team observed participants' engagement, understanding, and skill development during sessions. Observation focused on: (1) ability to identify consumer segments, (2) understanding of trust and reputation concepts, (3) quality of interactions, and (4) observable changes in confidence and engagement. Structured observation forms with quantitative (Likert-scale) and qualitative components were used.

Systematic examination of outputs produced during mentoring sessions provided concrete evidence of understanding and ability to apply concepts. Documents collected included consumer profiles, segmentation matrices, marketing action plans, and lists of institutional strengths. Documents were evaluated for clarity, completeness, and practical relevance.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the lead implementer to obtain preliminary information about current marketing practices, challenges, and expectations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Interviews focused on: (1) pesantren history and status, (2) current marketing practices, (3) challenges in attracting students, (4) previous capacity building experiences, and (5) intervention expectations.

Thematic analysis identified, analyzed, and reported patterns within observation data and participant outputs (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Analysis followed the six-phase approach: (1) familiarization, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. Observation notes and document outputs were coded according to themes derived from the conceptual framework: consumer identification, segmentation, marketing strategy formulation, trust and reputation, and practical applicability.

Systematic evaluation of participant outputs involved: (1) reviewing all documents, (2) coding according to predetermined categories (completeness, relevance, alignment, practical applicability), (3) assigning quality scores, and (4) synthesizing findings across documents.

Findings from observation, document analysis, and interviews were integrated using a convergent approach, comparing and contrasting findings to identify patterns and insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Ethical approval was obtained through the institutional review process at Hasnur Polytechnic. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were informed about the activity's purpose, participation nature, data collection types, and data usage (Malik et al., 2026).

Participation was voluntary with right to withdraw. Confidentiality and anonymity were protected by removing participant identifiers and reporting findings in aggregate (Shahiwala et al., 2026). Data was stored securely with access limited to the research team.

The intervention was designed with respect for participants' knowledge, experience, and time, using a participatory approach emphasizing co-learning rather than expert-recipient dynamics. The activity maximized benefits and minimized risks, with ethical clearance documented and available upon request.

RESULT

This section presents findings from the community service activity conducted at Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin, Beringin Village. Results are organized according to output metrics, outcome measurements, and impact indicators, following the Theory of Change framework that guided this intervention.



Figure 1. Documentation

The activity successfully reached seven pesantren administrators, representing the full target population. Participants included:

Table 1. Participant Composition and Roles

Role	Key Responsibilities
Pesantren Leadership	Institutional oversight, community relations
New Student Admissions	Student recruitment, enrollment processing
Public Relations	External communication, community engagement
Teacher Representatives	Program delivery, parent communication

Participant attendance was 100%, indicating strong institutional commitment to improving marketing capacity. The intervention delivered 5 hours of structured training and mentoring across three stages:

Table 2 Training Hours by Stage

Stage	Activity
1	Consumer Analysis Material Presentation
2	Conventional Marketing Strategy Presentation
3	Mentoring and Practice

The mentoring and practice component accounted for 40% of total time, emphasizing skill development over passive knowledge transmission.

During mentoring sessions, participants produced three output types:

1. Detailed profiles for three priority consumer segments including demographics, needs, preferences, and decision-making factors.
2. Segmentation tables identifying bases, characteristics, needs, trust sources, and appropriate strategies.
3. Five concrete marketing strategies with specified target audiences, activities, responsible parties, and timelines.

Observational data indicated participants demonstrated increased understanding of consumer analysis and marketing concepts:

Table 3 Themes from Observational Data on Participant Learning

Theme	Evidence
Understanding Consumer Segmentation	Participants actively identified and discussed different consumer groups
Recognition of Trust and Reputation	Participants discussed importance of reputation and trust
Application of Marketing Concepts	Participants applied concepts to institutional context
Collaborative Learning	Productive group discussions and shared experiences

All seven participants demonstrated ability to identify multiple consumer segments with distinct characteristics. Initially focusing only on geographic segmentation, participants also identified behavioral segmentation, specifically alumni families showing development of more nuanced understanding.

Six participants explicitly discussed reputation and trust, articulating how community trust is built through consistent service delivery and community engagement. One participant noted, parents trust us because they see the results of our education in their own children and neighbors.

Through facilitated mentoring, participants identified three priority prospective-student segments:

Table 4 Priority Prospective-Student Segments Identified

Segment	Segmentation Basis	Characteristics	Primary Needs	Trust Source	Strategy
Local families	Geographic	Beringin Village and surrounding; limited information access	Affordable fees, religious education, proximity	Community leaders, religious figures, family	Direct outreach through community leaders
Alumni families	Behavioral/Relationship	Family ties to alumni;	Value continuity, proven	Alumni testimonials, family	Alumni testimonial

Out-of-village families	Geographic	prior experience	teaching quality	recommendations	s, personal visits
		Outside immediate area; limited exposure	Clear curriculum, dormitory facilities, Islamic environment	Religious figures, printed materials	Flyers, open house events, local radio

The segmentation analysis reveals participants recognized different prospective families have distinct priorities and trust different information sources. Identification of alumni families as a distinct behavioral segment represents significant insight, this segment was not initially considered but emerged during discussions about reputation and trust.

Participants collectively developed five conventional marketing strategies:

Table 5 Conventional Marketing Action Plan

Strategy	Target Segments	Activities	Responsible Party	Timeline
Alumni Promotion	Alumni, Out-of-village	Invite alumni testimonials; create testimonial booklet	Public Relations	Ongoing
Community Leader Outreach	Local	Regular meetings with leaders, religious figures, village heads; institutional updates	Pesantren Leadership	Monthly
Flyer Distribution	Out-of-village	Create/distribute flyers in mosques, prayer rooms, village halls; include key information and contact	Admissions Section	Quarterly
Religious Gatherings & Open House	All	Annual religious gatherings and open days to showcase institution	Committee Team	Annually
Parents' Recommendation Network	All	Encourage current parents to provide direct recommendations; provide information cards for sharing	Public Relations	Ongoing

The strategies represent an integrated approach addressing all three segments. Alumni Promotion leverages proven outcomes. Community Leader Outreach addresses local families through trusted figures. Flyer Distribution targets out-of-village families with detailed

information. Religious Gatherings provide direct exposure. Parents' Recommendation Network leverages existing trust and satisfaction.

Participants identified internal strengths to communicate as value propositions:

Table 6 Institutional Strengths Identified

Strength	Description	Segment Relevance
Affordable Fees	Accessible for families with limited resources	Local, Out-of-village
Conducive Learning Environment	Supportive, community-based, close to nature	All
Competent Religious Teaching Staff	Qualified, experienced educators	All
Character-Building Curriculum	Emphasizes moral and spiritual development	Alumni, Local

Participants recognized these strengths align with identified segment needs. Affordable fees address economic constraints. Conducive environment appeals to all families. Competent staff and character curriculum address core values motivating Islamic education enrollment. While the one-day intervention limits measurement of long-term behavioral change, several indicators suggest potential for sustained institutional impact.

Production of high-quality outputs during mentoring sessions demonstrates participants developed practical skills applicable to ongoing marketing efforts. Output completeness and relevance indicate internalized concepts and independent application. The outputs provide concrete guidelines usable without ongoing external support, achieving the goal of building sustainable institutional capacity.

Based on the strategies developed and the understanding demonstrated by participants, there is potential for increased enrollment in subsequent academic years. The strategies developed address several specific barriers that may be limiting current enrollment. First, limited information access among out-of-village families is addressed through flyer distribution and open house events, which provide detailed information about the pesantren's offerings to families who may have limited exposure to the institution. Second, limited trust among new families is addressed through alumni promotion and community leader outreach, which leverage existing trust relationships to build confidence among prospective families. Third, limited community awareness is addressed through religious gatherings and open house events, which increase the pesantren's visibility within the broader community. Fourth, limited referral networks are addressed through parents' recommendation networks, which formalize and expand existing word-of-mouth marketing by systematically leveraging satisfied families as advocates.

Several factors identified during the activity suggest the potential for sustained impact beyond the immediate intervention. Institutional commitment is evidenced by the full

attendance of all participants throughout the entire intervention, indicating strong organizational commitment to improving marketing capacity. The practical outputs produced during the mentoring sessions, including consumer profiles, segmentation matrices, and marketing action plans provide actionable guidelines that can be used by the pesantren without ongoing external support. The integration of trust insights into the strategies developed reflects participants' understanding of trust and reputation theory (Khamitov et al., 2024), suggesting that they are equipped to build and maintain institutional trust systematically. Finally, the collaborative and participatory nature of the intervention built collective ownership of the strategies among the administrators, increasing the likelihood of sustained implementation even after the external support concludes.

While the intervention produced positive outcomes, several challenges and constraints were identified that may affect long-term impact. The limited time available, the one-day format restricted the depth of material coverage and practice, and some participants expressed a desire for more time to develop strategies and address specific implementation challenges. Resource constraints may also limit implementation, as some strategies such as flyer distribution and open house events require financial resources that are currently limited. The limited digital integration represents another constraint; while the focus on conventional marketing is appropriate for the rural context, gradual integration of simple digital tools could enhance reach and efficiency. Finally, the pesantren currently lacks a systematic approach to evaluating marketing effectiveness, which could limit the ability to adapt strategies based on evidence and continuously improve marketing efforts. These challenges suggest that sustained mentoring and periodic evaluation of marketing strategy implementation are needed to ensure that the formulated strategies can be implemented consistently and adapt to changing community needs.

The following figures illustrate intervention logic, participant engagement, and marketing strategy framework.

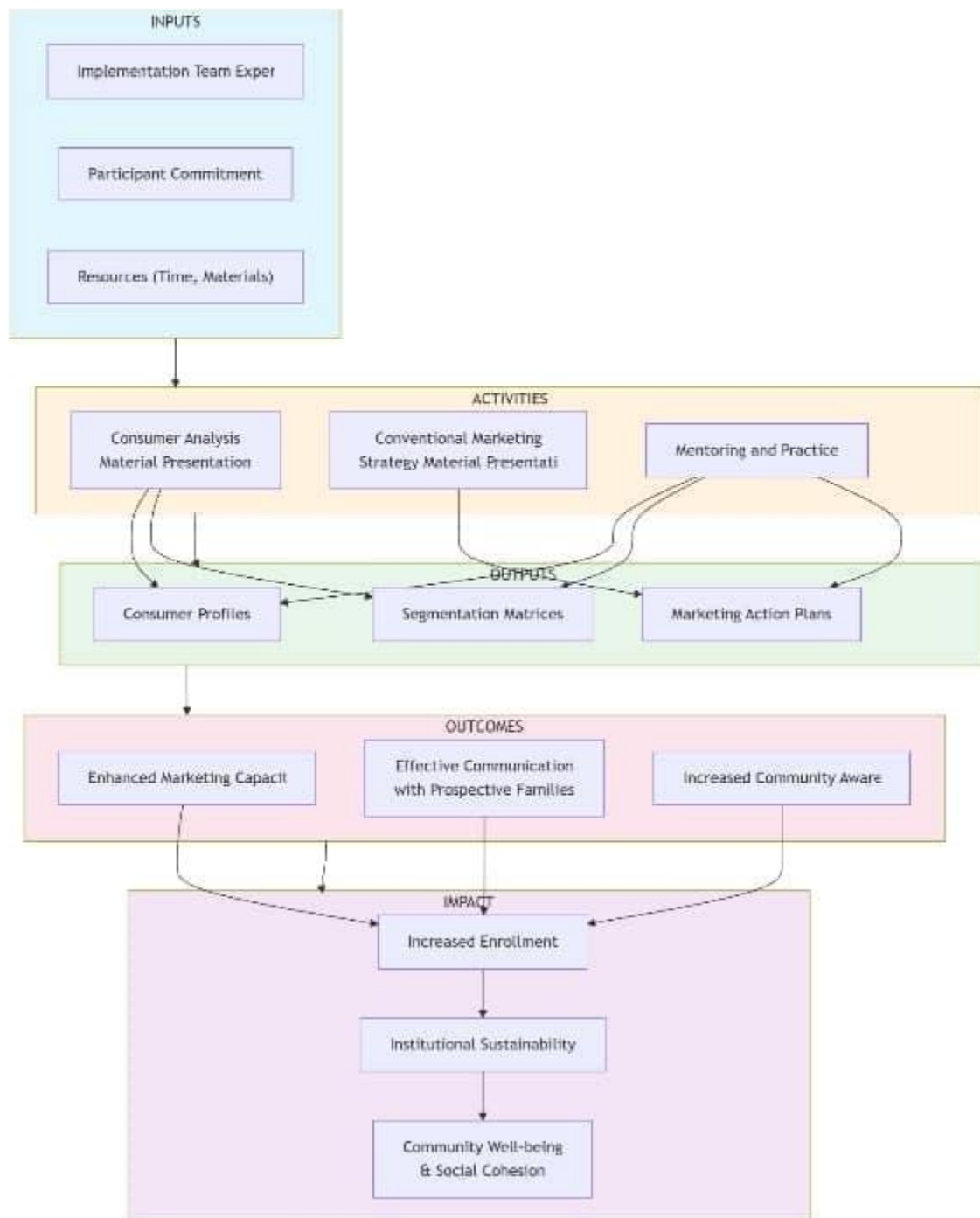


Figure 2 Theory of Change Framework

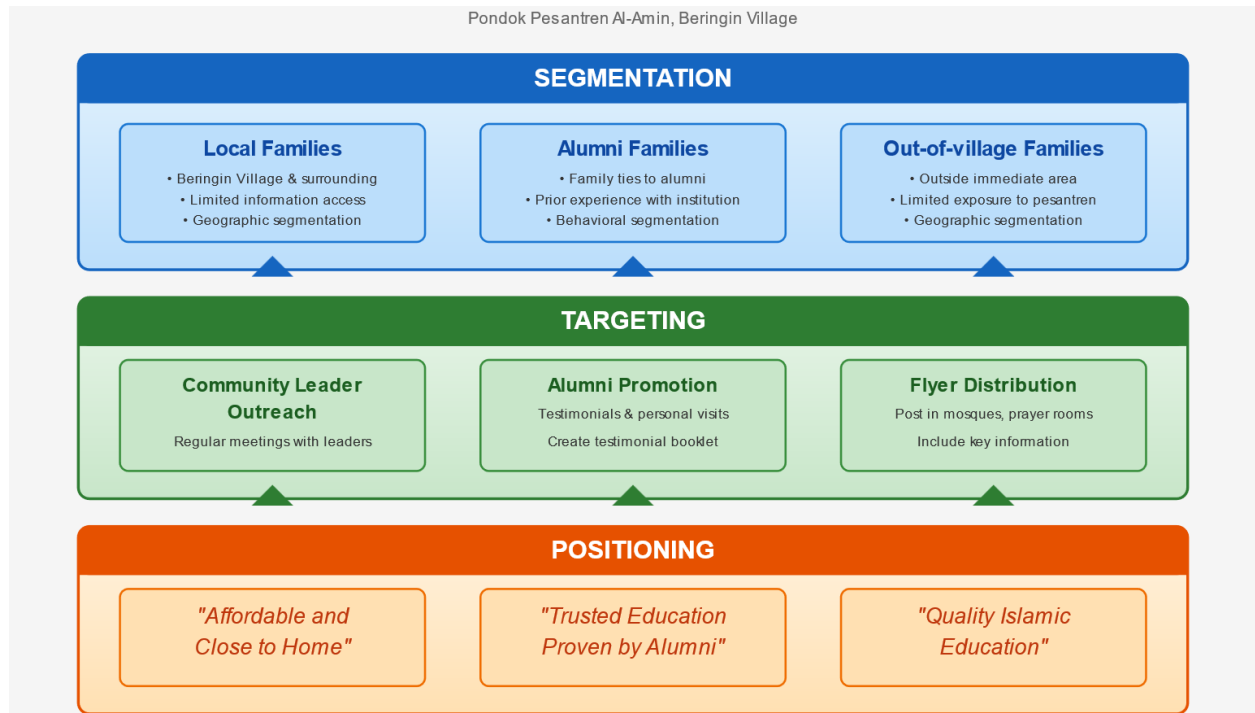


Figure 3 Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning Framework

These figures illustrate the causal pathway from inputs to impact (Figure 2), the segmentation, targeting, and positioning framework (Figure 3), demonstrating how the theoretical framework guided practical application.

DISCUSSION

This community service activity demonstrates that participatory training and direct mentoring can effectively enhance the capacity of pesantren administrators in consumer analysis and conventional marketing strategy formulation.

The finding that all seven participants successfully identified three priority consumer segments and formulated five actionable marketing strategies indicates achievement of primary learning objectives. This success can be attributed to the participatory approach, which leveraged participants' insider knowledge while introducing structured analytical frameworks.

The participatory action research design proved effective because it recognized participants as experts on their own context. Hastasari et al. (2022) found, Islamic boarding schools rely heavily on direct communication and personal approaches. Rather than imposing external frameworks, this intervention built on existing community knowledge and relationships, making strategies both contextually appropriate and institutionally owned.

The 100% attendance and active participation suggest strong institutional commitment to improving marketing capacity. This commitment is essential for sustainability, Rokimin et al. (2022) emphasized that successful marketing requires organizational buy-in and sustained effort.

The identification of three distinct segments, local families, alumni families, and out-of-village families represents significant advancement in the pesantren's marketing approach. Prior to intervention, promotional efforts were undifferentiated, relying on passive word-of-mouth without systematic targeting.

The distinction between geographic segmentation and behavioral segmentation is particularly noteworthy. Participants initially focused on geographic factors but, through guided discussion, recognized alumni families as a distinct segment with unique characteristics. This reflects understanding that consumer behavior is influenced by prior experience and relationships, not just demographics.

This aligns with consumer behavior theory, which emphasizes effective segmentation should consider multiple bases (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Alumni families as a behavioral segment is valuable because it recognizes existing relationships and proven outcomes as powerful marketing assets. The segmentation also reflects understanding of trust dynamics identified by Khamitov et al. (2024) different segments trust different information sources: local families trust community leaders, alumni families trust personal experience, and out-of-village families trust religious figures and printed materials.

The marketing strategies reflect integration of consumer trust research insights. Alumni promotion leverages proven outcomes to build reputation. Community leader outreach builds trust through respected figures. Parents' recommendation networks formalize existing word-of-mouth marketing as powerful social proof.

This integration of trust theory into practical strategy formulation is a key contribution. Prior research on Islamic educational institution marketing has focused primarily on describing practices (Hastasari et al., 2022) without explicit connection to theoretical frameworks. By linking strategy development to trust theory, this intervention provides a theoretically grounded, replicable approach.

The strategies also align with the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Alumni promotion and community leader outreach address subjective norms through social influence. Flyer distribution and open house events address attitudes by shaping positive perceptions. Parents' recommendation networks address perceived behavioral control by making enrollment seem feasible and community-supported.

Participants' recognition of the importance of transparent communication about curriculum, facilities, and fees reflects understanding of expectation management. As Schiebler et al. (2026) found, higher expectations are associated with higher satisfaction, but only when met or exceeded. Managing community expectations through consistent, honest communication is essential for building satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth.

The identification of institutional strengths, affordable fees, conducive environment, competent staff, character-building curriculum provides foundation for realistic expectation-

setting. By communicating these strengths transparently, the pesantren attracts families whose expectations align with actual offerings, reducing dissatisfaction risk.

The production of documented consumer profiles, segmentation matrices, and marketing action plans represents tangible evidence of capacity building. These outputs document learning, provide practical implementation guidelines, and create institutional memory maintainable despite personnel changes.

The quality and completeness of outputs indicate participants internalized concepts and can apply them independently, suggesting sustainable capacity building rather than temporary assistance. The outputs also provide a baseline for future evaluation, enabling the pesantren to track progress and adapt strategies based on results.

The findings are consistent with and extend previous research on Islamic educational institution marketing. Rokimin et al. (2022) found educational institutions require marketing strategies to satisfy stakeholders, this activity provides a practical approach for developing such strategies. Alfianto (2020) emphasized deep understanding of consumers considering moral, cultural, and spiritual values the segmentation developed reflects this understanding, recognizing local families value proximity and affordability while alumni families value continuity and proven quality.

This activity contributes several novel findings to the literature on marketing capacity building in Islamic educational institutions:

First, the integration of consumer trust theory (Khamitov et al., 2024), TPB (Ajzen, 1991), and expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Schiebler et al., 2026) into practical marketing strategy development represents a novel contribution. While these theories have been applied broadly in consumer research, their application to marketing capacity building in Islamic boarding schools has been limited.

Second, the identification of alumni families as a distinct behavioral segment in pesantren marketing is a novel insight. While alumni networks are recognized as important in general educational marketing, the specific characteristics and needs of alumni families in Islamic boarding school contexts have received limited attention.

Third, the participatory approach combining training with direct mentoring and output production provides a replicable model for capacity building in similar contexts, building internal capacity that can be sustained by the institution.

Fourth, the explicit connection between community-based marketing approaches and trust theory provides theoretical rationale for conventional marketing in rural contexts. While digital marketing receives significant attention, this activity demonstrates conventional marketing based on community relationships and trust remains essential in rural contexts.

The findings have several implications for consumer behavior and marketing theory in educational contexts.

First, the findings support applicability of consumer trust theory (Khamitov et al., 2024) to educational contexts. Strategies reflect understanding that integrity-based antecedents, reputation, ethicality, social responsibility are more effective in building trust than reliability-based factors, suggesting broad applicability beyond commercial contexts.

Second, the findings support applicability of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) to enrollment decisions. Strategies address attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, recognizing enrollment decisions are influenced by multiple factors.

Third, the findings support relevance of expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Schiebler et al., 2026) to educational contexts. Emphasis on transparent communication and realistic expectation-setting reflects understanding that satisfaction is influenced by the relationship between expectations and perceived performance.

The findings have several implications for Islamic boarding schools and similar educational institutions:

First, participatory training and mentoring approaches are effective for building marketing capacity. Rather than providing external support or generic training, institutions should invest in capacity building that leverages existing community knowledge and builds internal capability.

Second, consumer segmentation is essential for effective marketing. Rather than undifferentiated promotional approaches, institutions should identify distinct consumer segments and develop targeted strategies for each.

Third, trust and reputation are critical marketing assets. Strategies building trust through community relationships, alumni testimonials, and transparent communication are more effective than purely informational approaches.

Fourth, conventional community-based marketing remains relevant in rural contexts. While digital approaches may complement efforts, institutions should not abandon conventional marketing leveraging existing social relationships and community networks.

The findings should be interpreted with consideration of several limitations:

First, the small participants size limits generalizability. Results may not be representative of all Islamic boarding schools, particularly those in urban areas or with different institutional characteristics.

Second, the one-day format limited depth of material coverage and practice. Longer interventions might produce more comprehensive and nuanced marketing strategies.

Third, the absence of long-term follow-up means sustained implementation and impact could not be assessed. Future research should track implementation and assess impact on enrollment and institutional sustainability.

Fourth, the activity focused on conventional marketing approaches appropriate for rural context. Integration of simple digital tools could enhance reach and efficiency but was beyond the scope of this intervention.

Despite these limitations, the findings provide valuable insights into marketing capacity building in rural Islamic boarding schools and offer a replicable model for similar interventions in other contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The implementation team expresses gratitude to: (1) Director of Hasnur Polytechnic, (2) Head of P3M Hasnur Polytechnic, (3) Heads/Coordinators of the International Marketing Management, Digital Business, and Digital Business Accounting Study Programs, (4) Administrators and staff of Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Beringin Village for their participation and cooperation, and (5) Various parties who have supported the implementation of this activity.

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