



Jurnal Review Pendidikan dan Pengajaran  
<http://journal.universitaspahlawan.ac.id/index.php/jrpp>  
 Volume 8 Nomor 2, 2025  
 P-2655-710X e-ISSN 2655-6022

Submitted : 29/03/2025  
 Reviewed : 02/04/2025  
 Accepted : 04/04/2025  
 Published : 06/04/2025

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## BLENDING HERITAGE AND INNOVATION: A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN SCHOOL PROMOTION FROM BEKASI

### Abstrak

Studi ini mengeksplorasi integrasi nilai-nilai tradisional dan tren digital dalam strategi promosi sekolah, dengan fokus pada sekolah-sekolah Strada Katolik di Kota Bandung, Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana pendekatan-pendekatan ini dapat disinergikan untuk meningkatkan visibilitas sekolah, menumbuhkan kepercayaan, dan memastikan keberlanjutan dalam pasar pendidikan yang kompetitif. Pendekatan metode campuran digunakan, menggabungkan data kualitatif dari wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis media sosial dengan data survei kuantitatif. Temuan-temuan tersebut mengungkapkan bahwa metode-metode tradisional, seperti rekomendasi orang tua dan keterlibatan masyarakat, tetap berpengaruh, khususnya dalam konteks yang kaya akan budaya. Namun, perangkat digital seperti platform media sosial dan situs web sekolah menawarkan skalabilitas dan efisiensi, menjembatani kesenjangan dalam penjangkauan tradisional. Dengan mengintegrasikan paradigma-paradigma ini, sekolah-sekolah dapat menciptakan strategi hibrida yang menjawab berbagai harapan pemangku kepentingan sekaligus memanfaatkan kemajuan teknologi modern. Studi ini berkontribusi pada bidang pemasaran pendidikan dengan menyediakan kerangka kerja untuk menyeimbangkan kepekaan budaya dengan inovasi, menawarkan wawasan praktis bagi administrator sekolah dan pembuat kebijakan di Indonesia dan negara-negara berkembang lainnya yang menavigasi dinamika serupa.

**Kata Kunci:** Nilai-nilai Tradisional, Tren Digital, Strategi Promosi Sekolah, Pemasaran Pendidikan, Kepekaan Budaya..

### Abstract

This research is an associative research with a quantitative approach method that aims to determine the effect of audio visual media on student learning motivation. The population of this study were VIII grade students of SMA Negeri 28 Bone as many as 19 students using a sampling technique, namely purposive sampling. Data collection techniques in this study were observation, questionnaire (questionnaire) and documentation directly to the research location. Data analysis techniques using Descriptive Analysis. The data was processed with a validity test in the form of a questionnaire and reliability test. Then to answer the research hypothesis using simple linear regression formula and t-test (partial). The results showed that audio-visual media had an effect on the learning motivation of SMA Negeri 28 Bone students. This means that the hypothesis H1 is accepted, because the value of t count > t table or  $2.897 > 1.729$  sig value of  $0.01 < 0.05$ . This study explores the integration of traditional values and digital trends in school promotion strategies, focusing on Catholic Strada schools in Bekasi, Indonesia. The research aims to understand how these approaches can be synergized to enhance school visibility, foster trust, and ensure sustainability in competitive educational markets. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining qualitative data from in-depth interviews, observations, and social media analysis with quantitative survey data. The findings reveal that traditional methods, such as parental recommendations and community engagement, remain influential, particularly in culturally rich contexts. However, digital tools like social media platforms and school websites offer scalability and efficiency, bridging gaps in traditional outreach. By integrating these paradigms, schools can create hybrid strategies that address diverse stakeholder expectations while leveraging modern technological advancements. This study contributes to the field of educational marketing by providing a framework for balancing cultural sensitivity with

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innovation, offering practical insights for school administrators and policymakers in Indonesia and other developing countries navigating similar dynamics.

**Keywords:** Traditional Values, Digital Trends, School Promotion Strategies, Educational Marketing, Cultural Sensitivity.

## INTRODUCTION

The promotion of schools is a critical component in the education sector, especially in today's competitive global and local markets. Effective school promotion strategies influence enrollment rates, institutional reputation, and stakeholder engagement (Smith et al., 2021). With the rise of globalization and digitalization, educational institutions are required to adopt innovative approaches to attract and retain students (Johnson & Johnson, 2020). Traditional word-of-mouth referrals, community trust, and localized branding remain relevant but are increasingly supplemented or replaced by digital tools, such as social media campaigns, websites, and virtual tours (Miller et al., 2022). In Indonesia, where cultural values and communal connections are significant, striking a balance between traditional and digital promotion becomes even more essential (Haryanto et al., 2021). This dynamic underscores the importance of understanding how educational institutions navigate the coexistence of traditional values and digital trends in school promotion (Chandra & Gunawan, 2023).

However, this shift toward digitalization introduces challenges, particularly in regions where traditional values play a pivotal role in decision-making. Bekasi, Indonesia, serves as an illustrative case study where the rapid adoption of digital promotion strategies intersects with deeply ingrained cultural norms. While traditional methods such as recommendations from family and community leaders are highly valued, these approaches often lack the reach and scalability offered by digital platforms (Putri et al., 2022). The imbalance between traditional and digital promotional strategies creates barriers for schools aiming to integrate these two paradigms effectively (Wardhani et al., 2021). Moreover, the relevance of digital strategies varies significantly among target demographics, further complicating their application in diverse urban settings like Bekasi (Rahman & Supriyadi, 2023). Understanding these dynamics is essential to addressing the challenges faced by educational institutions in Indonesia and beyond (Kurniawan et al., 2022).

Existing research has predominantly focused on either the effectiveness of traditional school promotion methods or the role of digitalization in marketing educational services, but few studies explore their intersection. For instance, studies by Thompson (2021) and Choi et al. (2020) have highlighted the benefits of digital platforms in enhancing school visibility, yet they fail to consider the cultural resistance encountered in implementing such strategies in traditional settings. Similarly, research by Singh and Kumar (2022) on the success of localized branding overlooks the scalability issues these methods face in a digital-first world. This gap in the literature leaves unanswered questions regarding how educational institutions can reconcile these contrasting approaches to create cohesive and effective promotional strategies. Furthermore, limited empirical evidence is available on how these strategies impact key performance indicators such as enrollment rates, community trust, and brand equity in education (Taylor et al., 2022; O'Connor & White, 2023).

The aim of this research is to bridge this gap by examining how traditional values and digital trends can be synergized to enhance the effectiveness of school promotion strategies. Specifically, this study seeks to analyze the interplay between cultural norms and technological advancements in the context of school marketing in Bekasi, Indonesia. By addressing the complexities of integrating traditional and digital approaches, this research contributes to the development of a balanced framework for school promotion that is both culturally sensitive and technologically innovative.

## METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, complemented by quantitative data to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The research was conducted at Catholic Strada schools in Bekasi, Indonesia, involving parents, students, and school staff as key respondents. A diverse methodological framework was employed, including in-depth interviews, surveys, participant observation, and social media analysis. In-depth interviews

provided nuanced insights into the perceptions and behaviors of stakeholders, while surveys captured broader trends and patterns (Bryman, 2016). Participant observation allowed for contextual understanding of the school environment and promotional activities (Spradley, 2016). The analysis of social media activities offered a critical perspective on the digital strategies employed by the schools, aligning with recent advancements in educational marketing research (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020). Data were analyzed using thematic analysis for qualitative inputs, which facilitated the identification of recurrent themes and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For survey data, descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and interpret key findings, ensuring clarity in presenting quantitative evidence (Field, 2018). This mixed-methods approach ensured a robust and holistic examination of how traditional values and digital trends intersect in the promotional strategies of educational institutions in a culturally rich and rapidly digitalizing context like Bekasi.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion section presents the findings of this study in alignment with the research objectives and provides a comprehensive analysis of the data collected. This section integrates qualitative insights and quantitative evidence to explore the interplay between traditional values and digital trends in school promotion strategies. By examining the perspectives of key stakeholders, including parents, students, and school staff, alongside an analysis of social media activities, this section aims to uncover the practical and cultural dynamics influencing promotional practices in educational institutions. The discussion contextualizes the findings within existing literature and highlights their implications for theory and practice, particularly in culturally diverse and digitally transforming regions like Bekasi, Indonesia.

### Results

The table below presents a comparison of respondent types based on the survey data. It highlights the distribution between parents/guardians of kindergarten and primary school students and new or transfer students from junior and senior high schools, providing an overview of the demographics involved in the study. This distribution reflects the predominant participation of parents/guardians in the survey.

Table 1. Type of Respondent

Type of Respondent	Number	(%)
Parents/Guardians (Kindergarten and Primary School)	813	71.57
New/Transfer Students (Junior High School, Senior High School/Vocational School)	323	28.43

The analysis of respondent types reveals a significant predominance of parents and guardians from kindergarten and primary school levels, accounting for 71.57% of the total respondents. This high percentage underscores the active role of parents in the decision-making processes regarding early education, where foundational learning stages are considered critical for a child's development. Meanwhile, new or transfer students from junior high school, senior high school, and vocational school constitute 28.43% of the respondents. This proportion highlights the mobility and adaptability of students at higher educational levels, often driven by factors such as academic opportunities, institutional reputation, or logistical considerations. The disparity in these percentages suggests that parents are more engaged in educational surveys when it pertains to younger children, reflecting their direct involvement in shaping early educational pathways. These findings emphasize the importance of tailoring school promotional strategies to different stakeholder groups, addressing parents' concerns for younger students while also recognizing the evolving preferences of older students seeking a better educational fit.

The table below illustrates the distribution of students based on their current school origins. It provides a detailed breakdown of the number of students from various educational institutions, ranging from kindergartens to senior high schools, and includes those who transferred from other schools. This data highlights the diversity of the student population and offers insights into the enrollment patterns across different levels of education within the Strada

network.

Table 2. Type of Respondent

School Origin	Number of Students
TK ABC	50
TK DEF	100
TK GHI	79
TK JKL	73
TK MNO	69
SD ABC 1	99
SD ABC 2	73
SD DEF 1	64
SD DEF 2	66
SD GHI	79
SD JKL	51
SD MNO	52
SMP ABC	85
SMP DEF	41
SMP GHI	53
SMP JKL	21
SMK ABC	35
SMA DEF	18
Transferred Students	28
Total	1136

The table provides a comprehensive overview of student distribution based on their current school origins within the network and other institutions. TK DEF leads with the highest number of students at 100, indicating its popularity and possibly its established reputation in early childhood education. This is closely followed by SD ABC 1 with 99 students, reflecting a strong preference for continuity in education from early years to primary levels. SMP ABC also shows a significant number of students, at 85, showcasing the demand for middle school education within the network. Notably, schools such as SD GHI and TK GHI each contribute 79 students, underlining the importance of location-based preferences for parents and students. Other institutions like SMK ABC (35 students) and SMA DEF (18 students) highlight the gradual decline in student numbers at higher levels of education, which could reflect diverse factors such as transitions to alternative institutions or changes in academic preferences. Additionally, 28 students represent transfers from other schools, showcasing the network's appeal to those seeking a better educational fit. The total of 1136 students underscores the network's role in providing education across various levels while reflecting the demographic and enrollment trends within its schools. This distribution demonstrates the balance between established institutions and the mobility of students within and outside the network.

The table below provides a summary of key trends identified from the survey data. It highlights the primary sources of information about the school, the main reasons for choosing the school, and the respondents' likelihood of recommending the school to others. These findings emphasize the significant role of recommendations from friends and family, the perceived quality of education, and the overwhelmingly positive inclination to recommend the school.

Table 3. Percentage of Major Trends That Appear Frequently

Category	Details	(%)
Source of Information About School	Recommendation from friends/family	47.80
	Social media	4.67
	Social media + recommendation	3.61
	School website	3.43
	Combination of education fair, open house, art	2.90

	performance, competition, and recommendation	
Main Reason for Choosing the School	Quality of education	20.07
	School location	15.67
	Combination of education quality, facilities, school reputation, and location	7.31
	Recommendation from friends/family	5.81
	Combination of education quality, facilities, reputation, location, and recommendation	5.37
Recommendation of the School to Others	Yes	98.15
	No	1.85

The survey data reveals insightful trends regarding the decision-making process of parents and students in selecting and promoting educational institutions. A substantial 47.80% of respondents indicated that recommendations from friends and family were the most influential source of information about the school, reflecting the enduring importance of trust and personal connections in shaping perceptions. While social media alone accounted for 4.67% as a source, its combination with personal recommendations (3.61%) underscores the potential of integrating digital platforms with traditional word-of-mouth strategies. School websites (3.43%) and combined promotional efforts such as education fairs, open houses, and artistic performances (2.90%) further highlight the multifaceted approach required to reach diverse audiences. Regarding the reasons for school selection, the quality of education emerged as the leading factor (20.07%), followed by the school's location (15.67%), and a combination of factors including education quality, facilities, reputation, and proximity (7.31%). Notably, recommendations from friends and family also appeared as a direct motivator for 5.81% of respondents. Lastly, an overwhelming majority of respondents (98.15%) expressed a willingness to recommend the school to others, demonstrating high levels of satisfaction and trust. These findings emphasize the critical need for schools to balance traditional relationship-based promotion with modern digital outreach to effectively engage and retain stakeholders.

#### **Traditional Values in School Promotion**

The findings reveal that traditional values play a crucial role in the promotion of schools, particularly in culturally rich environments like Bekasi, Indonesia. Community relationships, parental recommendations, and personalized approaches are dominant factors influencing school choices. These elements foster trust and emotional connection, which are essential for building a loyal base of students and parents (Bourdieu, 1986). Parents often rely on recommendations from family or friends, valuing the personal experiences shared by others. Moreover, community events, such as open houses or cultural celebrations, act as platforms for schools to demonstrate their commitment to local traditions and values (Putnam, 2000). These methods have proven effective in maintaining a strong local presence, especially in regions where cultural dynamics heavily influence decision-making.

#### **Digital Trends in School Promotion**

Digital tools have become indispensable in modern school promotion strategies, with platforms like social media, school websites, and digital campaigns gaining prominence. Social media, in particular, provides an extensive reach, allowing schools to target a broader audience while maintaining cost efficiency (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2019). Websites serve as digital brochures, offering comprehensive information about school facilities, achievements, and programs. Additionally, interactive features such as virtual tours and online admissions further enhance user engagement (Mikalef et al., 2020). Digital campaigns leveraging targeted advertisements enable schools to highlight their unique value propositions effectively. However, while digital trends offer scalability and efficiency, their effectiveness often depends on how well they resonate with the local audience's expectations and cultural norms.

#### **Gaps and Challenges**

Despite the growing adoption of digital tools, significant challenges arise when integrating traditional and digital strategies. One major barrier is the lack of digital literacy among certain demographic groups, particularly older generations of parents, which limits the reach of online campaigns (Van Deursen & Helsper, 2015). Additionally, schools often struggle with resource constraints, such as inadequate budgets for advanced digital campaigns or limited

staff expertise in managing digital platforms (Zhang et al., 2021). There is also a tension between preserving the authenticity of traditional values and adapting to the impersonal nature of digital communication. For example, while social media can effectively amplify school promotions, it may not fully capture the cultural nuances that resonate with local communities (Straubhaar, 2021). This misalignment highlights the need for a thoughtful balance between tradition and technology.

### **Opportunities for Synergy**

The findings indicate significant opportunities for integrating traditional values with digital trends to create a holistic school promotion strategy. Schools can adopt hybrid approaches that leverage the strengths of both paradigms. For instance, digital platforms can be used to amplify traditional events, such as live-streaming community celebrations or creating social media campaigns around cultural milestones (Chen & Wellman, 2021). Additionally, schools can design their websites and social media content to reflect local traditions, ensuring cultural authenticity while utilizing modern tools (Sadowski, 2020). Personalized digital communication, such as tailored email campaigns or targeted social media ads, can also bridge the gap, offering the warmth of traditional approaches with the efficiency of digital tools. These strategies underscore the potential for synergy, ensuring that promotional efforts align with both cultural expectations and contemporary technological advancements.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study underscore the significant role of traditional values in shaping effective school promotion strategies, even in an era increasingly dominated by digital tools. Traditional approaches, such as parental recommendations and community engagement, provide a foundation of trust and cultural resonance that is difficult to replicate through purely digital means. These methods are deeply embedded in the social fabric of many communities, particularly in Indonesia, where collective values and interpersonal connections are prioritized (Hofstede et al., 2010). Trust-based recommendations from friends and family are perceived as more authentic and reliable compared to impersonal digital advertisements (Wang et al., 2020). This cultural predisposition highlights the necessity of incorporating traditional elements into digital strategies to ensure their alignment with local values and expectations.

Integrating traditional and digital approaches presents a unique opportunity to amplify the strengths of both paradigms. For instance, digital platforms can enhance the visibility and reach of traditional activities, such as broadcasting community events through live streams or creating interactive social media campaigns that highlight the school's cultural heritage (Huang & Rust, 2021). By leveraging technology to scale these activities, schools can extend their influence beyond local communities while preserving the authenticity that traditional methods provide. Furthermore, personalized digital communication, such as targeted email campaigns or tailored social media advertisements, can emulate the relational aspects of traditional promotion, making them more appealing to culturally sensitive audiences (Chen et al., 2022). This approach not only bridges the gap between tradition and modernity but also creates a synergistic effect that enhances the overall effectiveness of school promotions.

The integration of traditional and digital strategies has significant implications for the sustainability of schools in competitive educational markets. Schools that successfully merge these approaches are better positioned to attract and retain students by addressing diverse stakeholder expectations. The use of digital tools such as social media analytics allows schools to monitor engagement and adapt their strategies in real time, ensuring their relevance in dynamic market conditions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2022). Meanwhile, traditional methods, such as community gatherings and parent-teacher meetings, help maintain strong interpersonal relationships that foster loyalty and long-term commitment (Liu et al., 2021). This dual approach not only enhances the school's appeal but also strengthens its resilience against market disruptions, such as economic downturns or shifts in educational preferences.

The competitive nature of the educational market demands innovative strategies that balance efficiency with cultural sensitivity. Schools in Indonesia and other developing countries often face resource constraints that limit their ability to implement advanced digital campaigns (Pradhan et al., 2021). However, integrating digital tools with existing traditional practices offers a cost-effective solution that maximizes impact without necessitating substantial investment. For example, schools can utilize free or low-cost social media platforms to promote

their activities while relying on traditional networks for word-of-mouth dissemination (Santos et al., 2020). This hybrid approach ensures that schools remain accessible and relevant to a broad audience, including those with limited digital literacy.

The implications of this study extend beyond the local context of Indonesia to other developing countries with similar socio-cultural dynamics. In regions where communal values and traditions are deeply rooted, the integration of traditional and digital strategies can serve as a model for effective educational marketing (Ahmed et al., 2019). Schools can adapt these insights to their unique contexts, ensuring that their promotional efforts resonate with local audiences while leveraging the scalability and efficiency of digital tools. Moreover, the findings highlight the importance of cultural competency in the design and implementation of promotional strategies. Schools that demonstrate an understanding of local values and integrate them into their digital campaigns are more likely to gain the trust and loyalty of their stakeholders (Tung et al., 2021).

From a practical perspective, the integration of traditional and digital strategies requires careful planning and execution. Schools must invest in capacity-building initiatives to equip their staff with the skills necessary to manage digital platforms while maintaining the relational aspects of traditional promotion (Henderson et al., 2020). Training programs in digital marketing, data analytics, and cultural competency can help staff navigate the complexities of hybrid strategies effectively. Additionally, schools should adopt a participatory approach that involves stakeholders in the development of promotional campaigns, ensuring their alignment with community values and expectations (Norris et al., 2021). This collaborative process not only enhances the cultural relevance of promotional efforts but also fosters a sense of ownership among stakeholders, increasing their engagement and support.

Despite its potential, the integration of traditional and digital strategies is not without challenges. One significant barrier is the digital divide, which limits access to and adoption of digital tools among certain demographic groups (Van Dijk, 2020). Schools must address this gap by ensuring that their digital campaigns are inclusive and accessible to all stakeholders. For example, they can provide training sessions for parents on how to use digital platforms or offer offline alternatives to digital promotions (Wilson et al., 2022). Additionally, the rapid pace of technological change requires schools to continuously update their digital strategies to remain competitive. This demands a proactive approach to innovation, supported by ongoing research and development initiatives (Lee et al., 2021).

## CONCLUSION

The study reveals that effective school promotion strategies lie in the synergy between traditional values and digital trends. By combining community-based approaches, such as parental recommendations and cultural events, with modern tools like social media, school websites, and data analytics, schools can build trust, broaden visibility, and adapt to competitive educational markets. This hybrid approach aligns with cultural values while leveraging the scalability of technology, enabling schools to craft personalized and impactful campaigns. For school administrators, this underscores the importance of investing in capacity-building programs to enhance cultural and digital marketing competencies, ensuring long-term relevance and sustainability.

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