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Development of Multi-Sector Partnership Strategies in Quality Planning for Holistic-Integrative Early Childhood Education

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of Holistic Integrative Early Childhood Education (PAUD HI) in Samarinda still faces challenges such as suboptimal cross-sectoral coordination, limited regulations, and low stakeholder participation, resulting in less than optimal service quality. This study aims to develop an effective partnership strategy in improving Holistic-Integrative Early Childhood Education (PAUD HI) quality. The research employed a Research and Development approach using the Plomp model, which consists of five stages: preliminary investigation, design, construction, evaluation and revision, and implementation. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and Focus Group Discussions. The study was conducted at TK Negeri 1 Samarinda and TK Islam Silmi Samarinda, representing public and private early childhood education (ECE) institutions. The findings reveal that the main challenges include weak partnership legalization, limited trained human resources, inconsistent stakeholder participation, concentrated coordination on principals, and limited funding. These conditions highlight the need for strengthening strategies through standardized systems, cross-sectoral coordination forums, capacity building, funding diversification, and integrated monitoring and evaluation. The developed strategy produced strategic documents, including a partnership roadmap, cross-sectoral Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and an integrated action plan. Expert validation indicated the strategy was highly valid (83.3%), while practitioner assessments showed it was highly effective (89.5%), with indicators covering

contextual relevance, coordination feasibility, operational practicality, impact on service quality, and replication potential in other institutions. The study concludes that the success of the model requires structured, participatory, and sustainable multisectoral synergy, and the developed strategy can serve as a reference for local governments, ECE institutions, and stakeholders in developing comprehensive PAUD HI services.

Keywords
Early Childhood Education
Education Quality
Holistic Integrative
Multisectoral Partnership
Strategy

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Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) serves as the fundamental foundation for developing high-quality human resources with strong character [1]. To optimize this foundation, the Indonesian government has implemented the Holistic-Integrative Early Childhood Education (PAUD HI) strategy, designed to comprehensively address children's essential needs—including education, health, nutrition, parenting, protection, and welfare [2]. This commitment is formalized through Presidential Regulation No. 60 of 2013 and further emphasized in Presidential Regulation No. 72 of 2021, which targets 70% of ECE institutions to deliver integrated services by 2024 to accelerate stunting reduction. Locally, this policy is supported by Samarinda Mayor Regulation No. 41 of 2021[3].

Despite this robust regulatory framework, the equitable distribution and quality of services remain significant challenges. Statistics show that while early childhood accounts for 10.82% of Indonesia's population, 38.71% of these children face health issues, and 12.41% live below the poverty line. Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) reveal that only 23% of ECE institutions nationwide meet the six quality indicators for PAUD HI. In Samarinda, out of 447 institutions, implementation is hindered by weak cross-sectoral coordination and services that remain sectoral rather than integrated [4].

Current challenges at the institutional level center on the lack of systematic quality planning and sustainable multi-sector partnerships. While some institutions in Samarinda have initiated collaborations with health centers or the private sector, these efforts are often incidental, poorly documented, and not integrated into institutional quality planning documents such as the Annual Work Plan or Internal Quality Assurance System. Furthermore, a significant disconnect exists between national policy and local implementation due to limited

inter-agency data integration and a lack of innovative governance principles like shared leadership [2], [5]–[7].

This study addresses these gaps by shifting from purely descriptive or top-down evaluative approaches to a Research and Development-based strategy. The novelty of this research lies in the development of a locally tailored, multi-sector partnership strategy that integrates contextual socio-cultural characteristics with institutional quality planning. By utilizing the Plomp development model, this study aims to provide a structured, participatory, and sustainable framework that bridges the gap between policy mandates and practical, cross-sectoral synergy for PAUD HI.

Literature Review

A. The Concept of Holistic-Integrative Early Childhood Education (PAUD HI)

PAUD HI represents a new paradigm in early childhood development, focusing on fulfilling children's essential needs in a complete and comprehensive manner [10]. It is an effort to nurture early childhood through programs designed to meet their basic needs fully, simultaneously, systematically, and in an integrated way. This concept aims to optimize children's growth and development from an early age [11]. According to the Directorate of Early Childhood Education Development, the meaning of holistic-integrative is as follows: Holistic refers to comprehensive treatment of early childhood, covering nutrition, health, education, parenting, and protection services to optimize all aspects of child development. Integrative means that early childhood care is carried out in a coordinated manner by various key actors at the community, local government, and national levels [12].

The term holistic-integrative implies completeness or wholeness, meaning that learning programs in ECE are carried out to facilitate children's physical and spiritual growth and development in a comprehensive manner. This approach views humans as whole beings, encompassing cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Furthermore, humans cannot stand alone, but are closely connected with their environment, other people, and God [13].

Thus, PAUD HI is a comprehensive approach designed to optimize child development through synergy among families, communities, and government, ensuring that all aspects of children's needs are met simultaneously and systematically. Presidential Regulation No. 60 of 2013 on Holistic-Integrative Early Childhood Development defines PAUD HI as an effort to fulfill the diverse and interrelated essential needs of early childhood in a simultaneous, systematic, and integrated manner.

B. Dimensions of PAUD HI Services

The implementation of PAUD HI is not only based on the philosophy of addressing children's needs comprehensively but is also manifested through various integrated service

dimensions. These dimensions ensure that all aspects of early childhood growth and development are optimally fulfilled, in line with the main objectives of PAUD HI [12].

1. Educational Services

Educational services in ECE institutions function as the core service aimed at developing children's potential, which includes moral and religious values, physical-motor, cognitive, language, socio-emotional, and artistic aspects. In this context, PAUD HI emerges as an approach that emphasizes the importance of education not limited to one aspect of development but covering all dimensions of children's growth in an interconnected and comprehensive manner [14].

2. Health and Nutrition Services

This dimension is crucial since good health and nutrition status are prerequisites for optimal cognitive and physical development. Early childhood requires special attention to health during their growth and development period, which will influence their future lives. According to Law No. 36 of 2009 on Health, Chapter I Article 1, health is defined as a state of physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being that enables individuals to live socially and economically productive lives. A person is considered healthy when physically, socially, and mentally well. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health in a broader scope as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity [15].

Programs for improving health and providing balanced nutrition are integral parts of PAUD HI. As the main goal of PAUD HI is to create Indonesian children who are healthy, intelligent, cheerful, and of noble character, these programs can only be optimally implemented if ECE educators possess the standard competencies to promote health and ensure balanced nutrition for young children.

3. Parenting Services

Parenting services play a crucial role in the successful implementation of PAUD HI. Within the PAUD HI concept, parenting goes beyond meeting children's basic needs, such as food and sleep. In a holistic approach, children's social and emotional development is emphasized because these aspects form the foundation for future cognitive and physical development. Loving and attentive care helps children feel safe, comfortable, and valued, supporting their growth into confident, empathetic individuals who can collaborate with their peers [16–17].

Parents are primarily responsible for ensuring children's well-being—spiritual, physical, and social. According to Child Welfare Law No. 4 of 1979, Article 9, families, educators, and communities are the parties interacting with children in daily life. Families serve as the main actors with a significant role in providing positive parenting from early

childhood to adulthood. In addition, ECE educators also bear a moral responsibility to support positive parenting, acting as a bridge for families in applying it at home and involving communities as part of PAUD HI implementation.

4. Protection Services

Children are members of society who possess the same rights as others and must be protected and respected. Protection is necessary to guarantee the fulfillment of children's rights so that they can live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in line with human dignity. Children must also be protected from violence and discrimination to ensure the creation of quality Indonesian children who are noble in character and prosperous [18].

Providing child protection services may involve various stakeholders, including parents, families, communities, ECE institutions, and government agencies, in order to create a safe and supportive environment for children's growth and development.

5. Welfare Services

Child protection and welfare in Indonesia are regulated through various policies and programs, including Article 34 of the 1945 Constitution, which states that the state is responsible for caring for neglected children and the poor. Therefore, fulfilling children's welfare is an essential element of PAUD HI as it is directly linked to the realization of children's basic rights. Law No. 23 of 2002 outlines children's rights, which include: the right to survival, the right to protection, the right to development, and the right to participation. This was later strengthened by Law No. 35 of 2014, which added the right to identity, complementing the five basic rights of children. Child welfare is also closely related to children's rights. Children's rights are fundamental and must be guaranteed for every child, from early childhood to adolescence (12–18 years old).

In PAUD HI implementation, synergy is carried out collectively between parents, ECE educators, and related stakeholders to ensure children's welfare. Welfare services can begin at the moment a family enrolls their child in an ECE institution. The implementation standards of children's welfare in ECE [12] typically include:

- Admission standards for children,
- Agreements between ECE institutions and parents regarding parenting patterns, and
- Standards for implementing learning processes in ECE institutions.

C. Collaborative Strategies in PAUD HI Governance

Cross-agency coordination is a key element in the provision of PAUD HI services. Since it goes beyond education and encompasses health, nutrition, protection, and welfare services, cross-sector synergy is an absolute necessity [19].

Cross-sector collaboration is a mechanism used by public and non-public organizations to deliberately work together, sharing roles, resources, and responsibilities to achieve complex common goals [20]. In the context of PAUD HI, cross-agency coordination strategies are designed to ensure integrated services and optimize the fulfillment of children's rights.

The Education Office plays the main role in ensuring the availability of inclusive, high-quality early childhood education services. Its responsibilities include curriculum preparation, teacher competency development, and program monitoring and evaluation. Coordination strategies may include joint programs with other agencies to integrate educational stimulation with health and nutrition services [21]. Health Office supports children's physical and mental health through immunization programs, growth and development check-ups, early detection of health issues, and nutrition education. Coordination strategies include scheduling regular health checks at ECE institutions, integrating child health data with education data, and developing SOPs that align health services with learning activities [20].

The Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection plays an important role in child protection and family empowerment. Strategies may include forming integrated child protection teams, conducting positive parenting campaigns, and intervening in child abuse cases. It can also act as a facilitator in building local child protection networks [22]. Social Affairs Office focuses on social empowerment and the provision of social assistance for vulnerable children and families. Strategies include aligning nutrition assistance programs, providing social rehabilitation services, and integrating family welfare services with ECE programs. It also supports beneficiary families in fostering children's optimal growth and development [23].

The Regional Development Planning Agency has a strategic role in formulating regional macro planning policies. Coordination strategies include integrating PAUD HI strategic plans into the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, strengthening local regulations on child services, and providing cross-sectoral budget allocations. It also serves as the main coordinator to ensure program continuity through binding policy formulation [24].

Cross-agency coordination must be implemented through both formal and informal mechanisms. Formal mechanisms include establishing cross-sector coordination forums, signing memoranda of understanding, developing integrated standard operating procedures (SOPs), and holding scheduled coordination meetings. Informal mechanisms may involve intensive communication among technical officers, joint field visits, and regular discussions to address challenges on the ground [25], [15], [26]–[27].

Thus, cross-agency coordination strategies are not only about bringing different stakeholders together but also about ensuring genuine synergy through clear role distribution, joint policy agreements, and integrated cross-sectoral programs centered on the best interests

of the child. This collaborative approach serves as an essential foundation for realizing high-quality, inclusive, and sustainable PAUD HI services.

Material and Methods

This research employs an R&D approach aimed at developing multi-sector partnership strategies for PAUD HI. The study was conducted at TK Negeri 1 Samarinda and TK/KB Islam Silmi Samarinda, representing both public and private institutional perspectives.

The research design systematically adopts the Plomp development model, which consists of three integrated phases to ensure the strategy's effectiveness:

1. Preliminary Research Phase: This stage involved a situational analysis to explore existing conditions, needs, and cross-sector partnership dynamics. Data were collected through deep observation, documentation review, and semi-structured interviews with principals and local policymakers.
2. Prototyping Phase: A draft of the multi-sector partnership strategy was designed, including the creation of a partnership roadmap, cross-sector SOPs, and integrated action plans. This prototype underwent iterative cycles of expert validation involving four specialists in educational management and early childhood services to ensure conceptual feasibility.
3. Assessment Phase: The final stage focused on effectiveness testing through field trials, Focus Group Discussions, and simulations with practitioners.

Participants and Ethical Procedures Participants were selected using purposive sampling, involving kindergarten principals, teachers, and representatives from the Education Office, Health Office, and Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Services. All participants provided informed consent before data collection began, and their confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the study.

The validity and effectiveness scores were calculated using a Likert-scale instrument adapted for R&D evaluation. The validity score (V) and effectiveness score (E) were derived using Equation 1.

$$V = \frac{X}{Y} \times 100\% \quad (1)$$

where:
V = Percentage of model validity
X= Total score obtained from validators
Y = Maximum score (number of items × highest score × number of validators)

Table 1. Model Validity Interval Categories

Interval (%)	Category
0 - 20	Infeasible
21 - 40	Less Feasible
41 - 60	Fairly Feasible
61 - 80	Feasible
81 - 100	Highly Feasible

Based on Table 1, it can be observed that a higher percentage indicates that the developed multisectoral partnership strategy model is considered more feasible for use, in terms of its substance, structure, and component integration. The model is categorized as "Feasible" if it obtains a minimum score of 61% and "Highly Feasible" if it exceeds 80%.

To assess the effectiveness of the multisectoral partnership strategy model after the limited field trial, researchers utilized questionnaires distributed to PAUD principals and teachers. The analysis was conducted using Equation 2.

$$E = \frac{X}{Y} \times 100\% \quad (2)$$

where:
E= Percentage of model effectiveness
X= Total score obtained from respondents (principals and teachers)
Y= Maximum score (number of items × highest score × number of respondents)

Table 2. Model Effectiveness Interval Categories

Interval (%)	Category
0 – 20	Ineffective
21 – 40	Less Effective
41 – 60	Fairly Effective
61 – 80	Effective
81 – 100	Highly Effective

Results and Discussions

A. Analysis of the Existing Condition of PAUD HI Partnerships

Based on in-depth interviews with the principals of TK Negeri 1 Samarinda and TK/KB Islam Silmi Samarinda, differences were found in the patterns and mechanisms of partnerships supporting PAUD HI. TK Negeri 1 applies a formal and structured partnership model, supported by Memoranda of Understanding and coordination forums. Partner involvement takes place from the stage of annual program planning, implementation, to evaluation. The partnership mechanism at TK Negeri 1 also includes drafting activity proposals and recording activities in official meeting minutes. Collaboration involves multiple sectors such as community health centers, the Department of Education, the Department of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, universities, and community organizations, with regular programs including health screenings, parenting education, and flagship activities like AKSIL. In contrast, TK Islam Silmi adopts a participatory and family-based partnership model. This approach emphasizes emotional closeness and social relationships, with mechanisms that are more flexible and informal. Program discussions and planning are carried out through annual meetings, informal gatherings, and intensive communication via WhatsApp groups. Partners at TK Islam Silmi also play a vital role in supporting health, caregiving, character building, and nutrition, although their involvement depends more on informal agreements and each

partner's availability. Collaboration is relatively simple and relies heavily on local communities and parents as the primary partners.

Findings show that both TK Negeri 1 and TK Islam Silmi have developed SOPs and MoUs as references in implementing partnerships. However, the completeness, systematic organization, and documentation of these instruments are not yet fully optimized. TK Negeri 1 tends to apply a more formal system, with some documents well-prepared and documented, although not all partners have formal MoUs. Meanwhile, TK Islam Silmi also has SOPs and MoUs, but their preparation and structuring are still in progress, so documentation is not yet fully systematic. These variations in partnership patterns and mechanisms reflect strategies tailored to each institution's context and characteristics, demonstrating the implementation of Holistic-Integrative ECE principles through different yet complementary approaches.

B. Implementation of Partnership-Based PAUD HI

A clear coordination mechanism is required to ensure that collaboration runs effectively. This mechanism is realized through the preparation of annual plans, the conduct of regular coordination meetings, the establishment of MoUs, the implementation of joint activities, as well as continuous supervision and monitoring. With such mechanisms, synergy among stakeholders can be systematically managed, ensuring that PAUD HI services are truly integrated and sustainable. As illustrated in the following diagram:

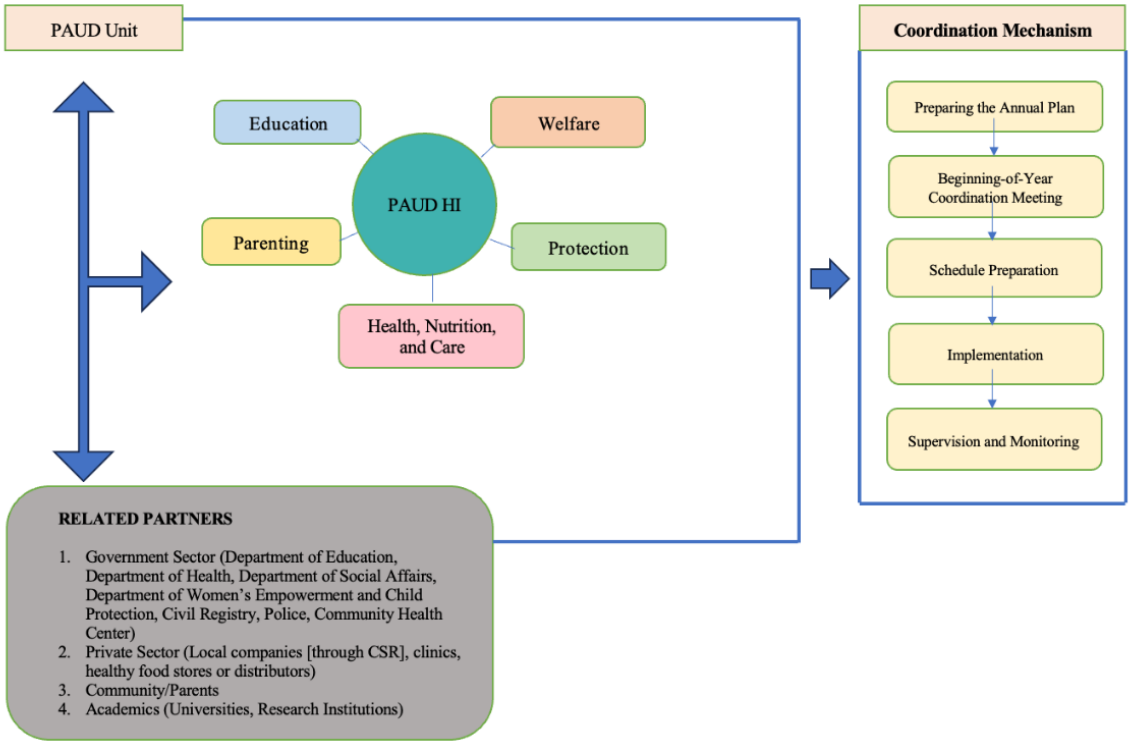

Fig. 1. Implementation of PAUD HI Based on Partnerships

C. Model Development

The proposed design for the multi-sector partnership strategy in planning the quality of PAUD HI in Samarinda was subsequently evaluated or validated by experts in education management. The experts who validated the model were:

1. Dr. Nur Agus Salim, M.Pd., Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Widyagama Mahakam University, Samarinda. His capacity as both a Dean and a Doctor in the field of Education Management makes him highly accustomed to strategic decision-making, building partnership networks, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. These activities directly relate to the principles of a multi-sector, partnership-based PAUD HI strategy. Therefore, he was highly relevant to assess the validity of the multi-sector partnership strategy model for implementing PAUD HI, as well as to provide critical and constructive feedback for the refinement of the developed model.
2. Dr. Malpaleni Satriani, M.Pd., a lecturer at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Mulawarman University. Her capacity is as an expert lecturer in the field of ECE with a doctoral qualification. Her expertise and experience in learning development and her understanding of Holistic Integrative ECE services make her highly relevant for assessing and providing input on the strategy model developed in this research.
3. Mrs. Wita Royani Dja'ang, M.Pd., in her capacity as the Head of the Division for ECE and Community Education Development at the Samarinda City Education Office, is directly involved in the policy-making, development, and supervision of ECE services in the region. This strategic position provides her with practical and policy-relevant insights to evaluate the multi-sector partnership strategy model for implementing PAUD HI. Her involvement was expected to ensure the model's alignment with real needs on the ground and its consistency with local government policies.
4. Mrs. Siti Rofidah, S.Pd. was chosen as a validator for her role as an experienced ECE supervisor in the supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of service quality, enabling her to provide practical input on the Holistic Integrative ECE strategy model.

During the validation process, the experts not only provided an assessment of the model but also offered constructive suggestions for improving the strategy's design. Dr. Nur Agus Salim emphasized the importance of ensuring that the designed strategy can be practically implemented in every ECE unit during the execution of the PAUD HI program. Furthermore, Dr. Malpaleni Satriani, M.Pd. suggested adding arrows to the model's design to represent coordination between sectors or partners. Mrs. Wita Royani Dja'ang, M.Pd., along with Siti

Rofidah, S.Pd., recommended that evaluation and monitoring be included as part of the strategy's development. As illustrated in Fig. 2.

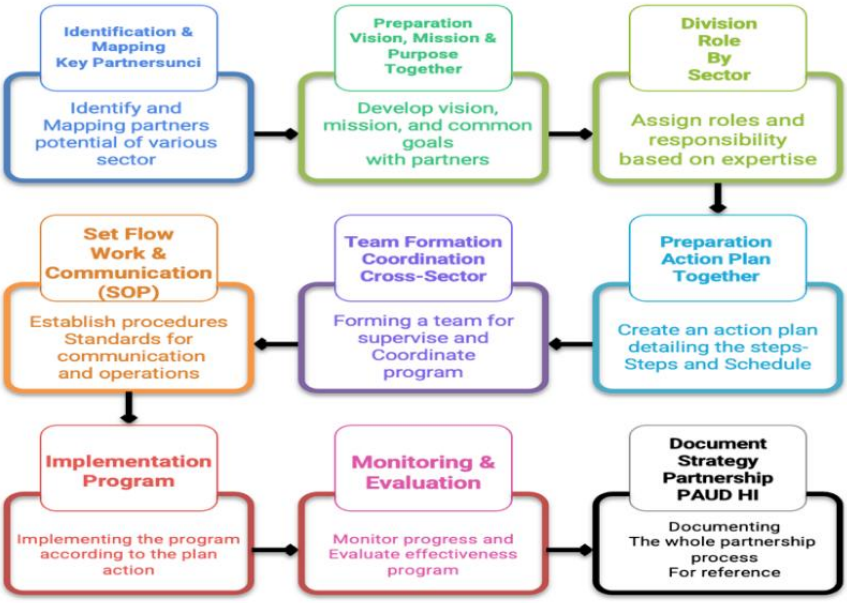

Fig. 2. Partnership Strategy Development Model PAUD HI

Based on the development process that has been carried out, the multisector partnership strategy in the quality planning of PAUD HI in Samarinda City demonstrates a high level of validity and effectiveness, both conceptually and in practice. Validation by an expert team, consisting of academics competent in educational management and ECE, as well as practitioners with direct experience in managing ECE services, provides a crucial basis for assessing the appropriateness and feasibility of the developed strategy model.

The results of expert validation indicate that this strategy meets the criteria of being highly valid, with a validity percentage of 83.3%, which falls within the "very feasible" category according to model validation standards. This validation includes the alignment of the strategy's content with the principles of PAUD HI and multisector partnerships, the relevance of strategic components, intersectoral integration, clarity of the model's systematic framework, consistency with initial findings, and the potential for implementation across various ECE units. This description confirms that the strategy model not only meets academic requirements but is also consistent with practical applications in the context of PAUD HI service delivery.

Expert feedback provided significant added value to the refinement of the strategy. Some suggestions emphasized the need for actual application of the strategy in ECE units, the addition of visual representations of coordination flows among partners in the model design, and the integration of evaluation and monitoring as integral parts of the strategy. This aligns with the multisector collaboration principles proposed by [28] which emphasize that

partnership effectiveness is determined by role clarity, systematic coordination, and continuous evaluation mechanisms to achieve shared goals.

At the effectiveness testing stage, the developed strategy was tested through simulations, focus group discussions, and limited trials at TK Negeri 1 and TK Islam Silmi, involving various practitioners, including the Education Office, Community Health Centers, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Services, universities, parent committees, and kindergarten principals. Effectiveness assessment by practitioners showed a score of 89.5%, which falls into the "very effective" category, with indicators including ease of understanding the model, institutional contextual suitability, operational feasibility, ease of cross-sector coordination, impact on PAUD HI service quality, and potential for replication in other ECE units. These findings confirm that the strategy is not only theoretically valid but also practically applicable, producing tangible improvements in service quality.

From the perspective of educational management theory and strategic planning, these results are consistent with the Plomp Model in curriculum or service strategy development, which emphasizes five main stages: Investigation, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation [11]. The Investigation stage involves identifying needs, challenges, and the context of PAUD units to ensure the strategy is relevant to actual conditions. The Design stage includes structuring the multisector strategy model, including partner roles, coordination mechanisms, and success indicators. During the Development stage, the strategy is elaborated in detail, including drafting a roadmap document, cross-sector SOPs, and an integrated action plan. The Implementation stage involves limited trials through simulations, FGDs, and practitioner involvement to assess feasibility and initial impact. The Evaluation stage is carried out through expert validation and practitioner effectiveness assessment, providing critical input for strategy refinement [29].

This model ensures that the resulting strategy has gone through an iterative and participatory process, from conceptualization, expert validation, field testing, to refinement based on practitioner feedback. Thus, the developed multisector partnership strategy is not only conceptual but also empirically grounded, ready for implementation, and has the potential to be replicated in other ECE units in Samarinda City or similar regions [30].

The success of this strategy also supports the literature on multisector partnerships in education, which shows that cross-stakeholder collaboration can improve service quality and program sustainability [13], [20], [24]. In the context of PAUD HI, this collaboration includes integrating education, health, nutrition, and social support services, in line with the holistic and integrative principles regulated in Presidential Regulation No. 72 of 2021 and Samarinda Mayor Regulation No. 41 of 2021.

Overall, this discussion demonstrates that the developed multisector partnership strategy meets the criteria for validity and effectiveness, both theoretically and practically. This strengthens the recommendation that the strategy can be used as an operational framework for planning and developing the quality of PAUD HI sustainably and can serve as a reference model for other ECE units in Samarinda City.

Conclusion

This study successfully developed a multisectoral partnership strategy to enhance the quality of PAUD HI using the Plomp development framework. The findings demonstrate that while institutional approaches vary—ranging from the formal, policy-driven structures of state institutions to the flexible, value-based networks of private ones—a standardized yet adaptive strategic framework is essential to bridge these differences. The resulting strategic documents, including a partnership roadmap and cross-sectoral SOPs, provide a practical solution to the persistent challenges of fragmented coordination and inconsistent stakeholder participation identified in previous implementations. Theoretically, this research contributes to educational management by proving that R&D-based strategies can effectively integrate diverse sectoral goals into a unified institutional quality plan. Practically, the high validation and effectiveness scores confirm that the model is operationally feasible and contextually relevant for local ECE units. Policy-wise, this strategy serves as a replicable operational framework for local governments to meet national targets, such as those mandated by Presidential Regulation No. 72 of 2021. Despite its success, this study is limited to the specific urban context of Samarinda. Future research should focus on replicating this multisectoral model in rural or underdeveloped regions to test its adaptability across different socio-economic landscapes. Additionally, long-term longitudinal studies are recommended to evaluate the sustained impact of these partnership strategies on child development outcomes and stunting reduction rates.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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