

ANALYSIS OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT IN PARENTS' DECISION MAKING IN CHOOSING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AT MTs NEGERI 2 MAGELANG

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Abstract

Marketing management in the field of education plays an important role in influencing parents' decisionmaking when choosing educational institutions for their children. This study aims to analyze the role of marketing management in parents' decision making processes in selecting MTs Negeri 2 Magelang as an educational institution. The analysis focuses on factors influencing parents' decisions, including academic quality, religious and moral education, institutional image and reputation, educational facilities, and affordability. The study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, in depth interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the Head of the Madrasah implements an integrated service marketing mix strategy (7P), encompassing product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. This strategy is realized through the development of Islamic based educational services integrated with the national curriculum, the establishment of affordable educational costs supported by scholarship programs, communicative and transparent promotional activities, enhancement of human resource quality, systematic management of learning processes and administrative services, and the provision of adequate educational facilities and infrastructure. Parents' decisions are influenced by academic quality, religious education and character formation, institutional image and reputation, availability of facilities, and cost affordability. Effective marketing management, supported by transparent communication and strong relationships with parents, the community, and alumni, contributes significantly to increasing parents' trust and interest, enabling MTs Negeri 2 Magelang to position itself as a competitive and trustworthy educational institution.

Keywords: Educational marketing, Parents' decisionmaking, Marketing mix (7P), Islamic school, Institutional trust

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasingly competitive educational landscape requires institutions to focus not only on enhancing academic quality but also on adopting effective marketing management practices. In this context, competition is understood as a social process involving individuals and groups who engage in systematic efforts to attain specific advantages over a defined period, aimed at attracting public attention by reinforcing existing perceptions and beliefs (Gillin & Gillin as cited in Efferi, 2014). This condition encourages educational institutions to effectively showcase their institutional strengths, build a positive image, and establish constructive relationships with the community, particularly parents as the primary decision makers in their children's educational choices.

In responding to these dynamics, Islamic educational institutions are required to integrate various managerial approaches through the implementation of well planned strategic management, both general and specific, as an effort to enhance institutional competitiveness and sustainability (Muljawan, 2019). In the educational context, parents' decision making is shaped not only by the quality of instruction, but also by institutional reputation, adequacy of facilities, cost affordability, and the level of trust in the management and delivery of educational services. Consequently, managerial competence constitutes a strategic factor in the successful governance of educational institutions, particularly in strengthening institutional reputation and enhancing public interest amid increasingly competitive conditions (Hakim & Rozi, 2024).

The success of educational institutions is strongly influenced by the managerial ability of their leaders to formulate and implement appropriate strategies. Strategy is understood as a large scale, future oriented plan designed to achieve the institution's vision and mission through deliberate and well directed actions (Pearce dan Robinson, 1997a). In line with this, the sustainability of educational institutions' competitive advantage requires a clear strategic orientation, whether through cost efficiency, the creation of service differentiation, or a focused approach to specific market segments with distinct needs (Bashori, 2017).

The implementation of strategic management in educational institutions involves a series of systematic managerial decisions and actions, ranging from the formulation of vision and mission, analysis of the internal and external environment, long term strategy formulation, strategy implementation, to evaluation and control (Ramli & Kartini, 2022). In the domain of marketing, the achievement of sustainable competitive advantage requires the development of marketing capabilities derived from the synergy between the organization's internal strengths and external positioning, the utilization of innovative knowledge, and the effective application of marketing intelligence and relational marketing to create, deliver, and sustain value for customers (Aghazadeh, 2015).

Therefore, educational marketing management becomes a crucial factor in building trust and attracting parents' interest. MTs Negeri 2 Magelang, as one of the public madrasahs, faces both challenges and opportunities in maintaining its existence and competitiveness amid the growth of private schools and madrasahs with distinctive advantages. In addition to offering academic education, this madrasah emphasizes religious education and moral character development as its core values, which constitute significant considerations for parents. The marketing management practices implemented include transparent information dissemination, strengthening the madrasah's image and reputation, improving the quality of educational services, and fostering harmonious relationships with parents and the wider community.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the role of educational marketing management in parents' decision making processes in selecting MTs Negeri 2 Magelang as an educational institution. The findings are expected to contribute

theoretically to the development of educational marketing management studies, while also serving as a practical reference for madrasahs in formulating effective, ethical, and sustainable marketing strategies.

2. METHODOLOGY

The type of research employed in this study is descriptive qualitative research, which aims to explore and clarify various symptoms, phenomena, and social realities by systematically and in depth describing a number of variables (Samsu, 2017). This study was conducted at MTs Negeri 2 Magelang based on the consideration that the madrasah demonstrates relatively high public interest compared to other schools at the same level in the surrounding area.

In obtaining the data, the researcher employed several data collection methods. Data were collected using triangulation techniques (Creswell, 2020). In this study, data analysis was conducted through systematic data collection and the assessment of data credibility to ensure trustworthiness. Credibility was established through methodological triangulation by simultaneously employing participatory observation, in depth interviews, and documentation on the same data sources (Sugiyono, 2013).

The types of data used in this study consist of primary data and secondary data. (Samsu, 2017). Primary data were obtained directly from the main sources through observation and interviews with key informants, while secondary data were collected from madrasah activities, madrasah management practices, and official documents in the form of institutional archives and reports, as well as relevant previous research studies, which served as supporting data to enhance the credibility of the research findings.

In addition, the researcher engaged in prolonged engagement by being intensively involved in the field to gain an in depth understanding of the research context. Member checking was also conducted with informants to ensure the accuracy of the data and the alignment between the researcher's interpretations and the information provided by the informants, thereby ensuring the scientific accountability of the research results.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that marketing management at MTs Negeri 2 Magelang is implemented in a well planned manner with careful consideration of the madrasah's vision and mission. This is consistent with the view expressed by Pearce and Robinson, who state that strategy constitutes an action plan for achieving an institution's vision and mission. (Pearce dan Robinson, 1997b).

There are five stages in strategic management, which constitute a series of managerial decisions and actions that can be used to help determine an organization's long term performance. This series of decisions includes an understanding of: first,

vision and mission; second, environmental analysis, encompassing both external and internal environments; third, strategy formulation, which involves long term strategic planning; fourth, strategy implementation; and fifth, evaluation and control (Ramli & Kartini, 2022). In this regard, the Head of MTs Negeri 2 Magelang appears to have undertaken a similar approach.

MTs Negeri 2 Magelang conducts environmental analysis to identify existing problems and potential solutions within the institution. Interestingly, beyond employing SWOT and SOAR analyses, MTs Negeri 2 Magelang also seeks to adopt a new strategic formulation introduced by Kim and Mauborgne, indicating a shift from a red ocean strategy toward a blue ocean strategy (Kim & Mauborgne, 2017). It is evident that MTs Negeri 2 Magelang has conducted strategic analysis based on the ERRC principles (Eliminate, Raise, Reduce, and Create) in developing flagship programs as distinctive features of the madrasah. Prior to determining its strategy, the head of the madrasah, together with the development team, identified parents' needs and expectations, particularly regarding academic quality, spiritual development, moral character formation, cost affordability, and a comfortable learning environment.

Following this planning process, MTs Negeri 2 Magelang adopted the Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS) by applying the ERRC framework to create flagship programs that are not offered by other schools at the same level in the surrounding area. MTs Negeri 2 Magelang is the only junior secondary level institution in Magelang Regency that offers a special sports program class and a special writing program class. In addition, the madrasah also provides special programs in tahfidz (Qur'an memorization) and science. Furthermore, the integrative curriculum implemented enables students not only to excel academically but also to develop strong faith, moral character, and adequate life skills. The Head of the Madrasah at MTs Negeri 2 Magelang, who tends to demonstrate a transformational leadership style, appears to adopt a marketing mix strategy (7P), encompassing the elements of product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence (Muadin, 2017). According to the Head of the Madrasah, the selection of this strategy is based on its perceived competitive advantage, as it enables the madrasah to highlight its institutional strengths, adapt to environmental changes, and meet community needs.

The Head of the Madrasah continuously strives to improve the quality of education through the provision of Islamic based educational services integrated with the national curriculum. The strengths most strongly perceived by parents include religious character development, academic and non academic achievements, and the madrasah's distinctive flagship programs. From a pricing perspective, educational costs are considered relatively affordable and commensurate with the quality of services provided, with the madrasah's status as a public institution enhancing parents' perceptions of value for money. This is further reinforced by the availability of scholarship programs for high achieving students, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and orphans, as well as a distinctive policy of free

education fees for siblings enrolled in the same academic year. The strategic and easily accessible location of the madrasah, supported by a conducive learning environment, also serves as an important attraction in parents' decision making processes. Promotional strategies are implemented through direct outreach to primary schools and *madrasah ibtidaiyah*, complemented by achievement based scholarships in academics, sports, and science, as well as promotion through social media, the madrasah's official website, and word of mouth communication. The findings indicate that recommendations from alumni parents and the surrounding community significantly influence parental decisions, supported by open and transparent communication regarding educational programs, student admission processes, achievements, and institutional activities. This transparency plays a crucial role in building parental trust and confidence in the institution. Moreover, MTs Negeri 2 Magelang adopts a relationship marketing approach by actively involving parents and the community in various school activities, fostering strong emotional bonds and positioning parents not merely as service users but as strategic partners in supporting the sustainability and development of the madrasah. The quality of human resources, reflected in the professionalism, discipline, and character building capacity of teachers and educational staff, further strengthens public trust. In addition, systematic and transparent learning and administrative processes, supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure such as representative classrooms, digitally based learning spaces, small libraries in each classroom, laboratories, a mosque, and other supporting facilities contribute positively to the overall image and perceived quality of the madrasah.

The data obtained from this study indicate an increase in the number of applicants in the student admission process (PPDB) at MTs Negeri 2 Magelang over the past three years. The findings from parents and guardians reveal that decisions to choose MTs Negeri 2 Magelang are influenced by several interrelated key factors. *First*, academic quality constitutes a major consideration, reflected in structured learning processes, teacher competence, and students' academic achievements. Parents perceive that the madrasah provides a balanced educational service that integrates both cognitive and affective dimensions. High levels of parental trust are evidenced by the fact that most students come from alumni families, where parents who previously studied at MTs Negeri 2 Magelang continue to entrust their children's education to the same institution. *Second*, religious education and character formation emerge as dominant factors in parental decision making. The integration of Islamic values into learning activities and madrasah culture is perceived as effective in shaping students' morals and personalities, thereby strengthening alumni parents' loyalty and trust in the continuity of the educational values transmitted across generations. *Third*, institutional image and reputation also influence parental trust. MTs Negeri 2 Magelang is perceived as a disciplined, orderly, and professionally managed madrasah, with a reputation that has been historically established and sustained over time. *Fourth*, the

availability of educational facilities and infrastructure is an important consideration, as adequate facilities support comfort and effectiveness in the learning process. *Fifth*, the affordability of educational costs further reinforces parental interest, given that the madrasah is able to offer quality educational services at relatively accessible costs for the broader community.

Overall, the findings indicate that effective educational marketing management contributes significantly to enhancing parental trust and interest in MTs Negeri 2 Magelang. Through strengthening institutional image, improving the quality of educational services, and fostering strong relationships with parents and the community, the madrasah has been able to sustain its existence and competitiveness amid increasingly intense competition among educational institutions. The integration of academic excellence, Islamic values, and ethical marketing strategies positions MTs Negeri 2 Magelang as a superior and trustworthy educational institution. Thus, marketing management functions not merely as a promotional tool, but as a strategic instrument for building institutional reputation and ensuring the sustainability of educational institutions.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that marketing management at MTs Negeri 2 Magelang plays a crucial role in influencing parents' decision making when selecting the madrasah. The institution implements a well planned marketing strategy based on the 7P framework aligned with its vision and mission, including the enhancement of educational quality, the development of religious and moral character, the strengthening of institutional image and reputation, the provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure, and cost affordability. Transparent communication and a relationship marketing approach with parents, alumni, and the community further reinforce trust and parental engagement. The integration of academic excellence, Islamic values, and ethical marketing practices positions MTs Negeri 2 Magelang as a competitive, trustworthy, and sustainable educational institution, demonstrating that effective marketing management serves as a strategic tool for institutional growth and credibility.

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