Strategic Integration of Islamic Values and Educational Marketing to Enhance Madrasah Image: A Case Study at MTs Al-Amiriyyah

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Abstract: Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) plays a vital role in Islamic education, yet it faces challenges related to visibility and competitiveness amid growing public expectations for adaptive and professional educational institutions. This study explores the concrete strategies implemented by MTs Al-Amiriyyah to build its institutional image by integrating Islamic values and modern marketing approaches. We employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through interviews with various informants, including the school principal, teachers, staff, foundation administrators, school treasurer, students, and alumni, as well as through participatory observation and documentation. The data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that MTs Al-Amiriyyah applies the 7P marketing mix strategy in a contextualized manner, such as through promotion through social media, flagship programs rooted in Islamic values such as tahfiz, language development, and digitalization, as well as transparent and responsive public services. These strategies have successfully enhanced the institution's image as an adaptive and competitive Islamic educational provider.

Keywords: Madrasah Tsanawiyah; Marketing Strategy; Institutional Image.

Abstrak: *Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) memiliki peran penting dalam pendidikan Islam, namun menghadapi tantangan visibilitas dan daya saing di tengah meningkatnya ekspektasi masyarakat terhadap pendidikan yang adaptif dan profesional. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi strategi konkret yang dilakukan oleh MTs Al-Amiriyyah dalam membangun citra kelembagaan melalui integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dan pendekatan pemasaran modern. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara informan meliputi kepala madrasah, guru, Staf madrasah, pengurus yayasan, bendahara madrasah, siswa dan alumni, observasi partisipatif, serta dokumentasi. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan model Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa MTs Al-Amiriyyah menerapkan strategi bauran pemasaran 7P secara kontekstual, seperti promosi melalui media sosial, program unggulan berbasis nilai Islam tahfiz, bahasa, dan digitalisasi, serta pelayanan publik yang transparan dan responsif. Strategi ini berhasil meningkatkan citra madrasah sebagai lembaga Islam yang adaptif dan berdaya saing.*

Kata Kunci: *Madrasah Tsanawiyah; Strategi Pemasaran; Citra Kelembagaan.*

INTRODUCTION

Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) play a strategic role in the Islamic education system in Indonesia, with the primary function not only as an institution for the transmission of knowledge but also as an institution for the development of Islamic education[1], and as an agent of internalizing religious values. In the context of national education, madrasahs have long contributed to shaping the character of a spiritual and moral nation. However, in the last two decades, madrasahs have faced significant pressure from the changing landscape of increasingly competitive national education, along with increasing public expectations of the quality, accessibility, and relevance of formal education.[2]

The main challenge faced by MTs today is the low visibility and competitiveness compared to public schools, both public and private, which are more popular and considered more responsive to markets.[3] Many parents prefer schools with modern facilities, an adaptive curriculum, and a strong orientation towards professional needs.[4] Meanwhile, most madrasahs are still trapped in traditional education patterns that are less adaptive to global dynamics and technological developments. This condition creates a gap between the madrasah's internal strengths in forming a religious generation and the external needs that demand 21st-century competencies.

This situation raises an important question: How can educational marketing strategies be applied in the context of madrasas to increase visibility and competitiveness without sacrificing the primary foundation's Islamic values? This is the main problem statement in this research. Many previous studies have focused on improving teaching quality, integrating technology, and strengthening the religious curriculum. However, few have highlighted marketing strategies as a relevant and potential managerial instrument in managing Islamic values-based madrasahs.

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[1] Hasyim Haddade et al., "Madrasah Management Strategies through Madrasah Reform Program: An Evidence from Indonesia," *International Journal of Educational Management* 38, no. 5 (2024): 1289–1304, https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-05-2023-0236.

[2] Abdul Rohman et al., "Integrating Traditional-Modern Education in Madrasa to Promote Competitive Graduates in the Globalization Era," *Cogent Education* 10, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2268456.

[3] Radna Andi Wibowo et al., "The Challenges for Indonesia to Integrate Dual Vocational Education and Training System," *Journal of Technical Education and Training* 14, no. 2 Special Issue (2022): 79–90, https://doi.org/10.30880/jtet.2022.14.02.008.

[4] Zhiqiang Ma et al., "Senior High School Teachers' Preference for Professional Development: A Case Study in the Central Region of Ghana Under the Current Free Senior High School Policy," *SAGE Open* 13, no. 3 (2023): 1–14, https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231185116.

This research offers novelty by examining the integration of Islamic values and strategic educational marketing approaches. The primary focus is on how madrasahs can utilize marketing principles, particularly the 7P marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence), in improving institutional competitiveness. In addition, this study proposes a contextual and religious approach to developing the institution's image, such as promoting santri achievements, value-based flagship programs, and using social media to expand public outreach.

Thus, the main objective of this research is to develop a marketing strategy model that madrasah managers can apply to increase visibility and competitiveness amid increasingly fierce educational competition. This model is expected to be a practical guide for stakeholders in designing madrasah management programs that balance market demands and commitment to Islamic values. This research's contribution is theoretical in enriching Islamic education management literature and practical in supporting the transformation of madrasah institutions towards a more adaptive, superior, and socially relevant education system.

LITERATUR REVIEW

Previous research on Islamic education marketing strategies shows that integrating religious values in the promotion process of institutions has a significant impact on increasing public trust and institutional image. A study by Shaikh and Alam Kazmi in 2022 revealed that a marketing approach highlighting Islamic values, such as honesty, simplicity, and worship-based service, can enhance parental loyalty towards the educational institution. This strategy is considered more effective than the conventional approach that only emphasizes the superiority of facilities and academics.[5]

Similar research by Alam and Iqbal in 2024 states that the delivery of educational messages through social media with spiritual narratives, such as preaching, teacher role models, and inspiring stories of students, successfully creates high engagement and strengthens the public perception of madrasas as institutions that not only educate but also instil life values. In the context of the pesantren community,[6] Daniel et al. (2025) added that the power of testimonials from alums who are successful both morally and academically becomes one of

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[5] Ayesha Latif Shaikh and Syed Hasnain Alam Kazmi, "Exploring Marketing Orientation in Integrated Islamic Schools," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 13, no. 8 (2022): 1609–38.

[6] Lukis Alam and Muh Iqbal, "Transforming Religious Learning: Empowering Faith Through Virtual Congregation in Indonesia," *HUNAFA Jurnal Studia Islamika* 21, no. 1 (2024): 1–24.

the most potent marketing strategies because it occurs naturally and is based on social trust.[7]

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, which aims to deeply understand the strategy of integrating Islamic values and the market approach in building the institutional image of madrasah. MTs Al-Amiriyyah was chosen as the research subject because it is a madrasah that has shown concrete efforts in maintaining Islamic values while adjusting to the demands of society and the dynamics of educational competition.

Data was collected through three main techniques: interviews, participatory observation, and documentation.[8] The respondents of this study were madrasah heads, teachers, madrasah staff, foundation administrators, madrasah treasurers, students, and alums. Data analysis was carried out using the interactive analysis approach of the Miles and Huberman model, which included three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.[9] All data obtained will be aggregated to find the main themes related to the madrasah's image-building strategy, the dynamics of integrating Islamic values and market strategies, and the challenges faced.

RESUL AND DISCUSSIONS

Differentiation Strategy through Featured and Regular Class Programs

In responding to the visibility challenge amid competition between educational institutions, this madrasah implements an academic differentiation strategy through two main service models: Excellent Class Program and Regular Class Program. This strategy aims to answer the increasingly complex needs of the community for quality Islamic education in academic and spiritual aspects.

According to the Head of Madrasah:

"We do not differentiate between regular and superior classes. All students have the same access, just their interests and abilities. We made this model so that it can reach all segments but still maintain quality."

[7] Kangwa Daniel, Msafiri Mgambi Msambwa, and Zhang Wen, "Can Generative AI Revolutionise Academic Skills Development in Higher Education A Systematic Literature Review," *European Journal of Education* 60, no. 1 (2025): e70036.

[8] Komang Ayu Henny Achjar et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Panduan Praktis Untuk Analisis Data Kualitatif Dan Studi Kasus* (PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2023).

[9] Qomaruddin Qomaruddin and Halimah Sa'diyah, "Kajian Teoritis Tentang Teknik Analisis Data Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif: Perspektif Spradley, Miles Dan Huberman," *Journal of Management, Accounting, and Administration* 1, no. 2 (2024): 77–84, https://doi.org/10.52620.

The Excellent Class program focuses on Tahfidz, Mathematics, and Language. Tahfidz class provides an intensive space for memorizing the Qur'an and character building based on pesantren.[10,11] The Mathematics and Natural Sciences class is designed for students interested in science, with more applicable learning, including laboratory activities and Olympic simulations. Meanwhile, the Language Class is for students who want to actively explore Arabic and English through a communicative approach and intensive training.

One of the teachers stated:

"Excellent class does not mean special facilities. What makes the difference is the learning design. Students are admitted based on their interests and initial assessment results."

In contrast, the Regular Class Program remains the backbone of madrasah education. The curriculum includes general subjects according to national standards and strong religious local content. This program is intended for students who want a balanced learning path between academics and spirituality without the pressure of early majors. Students can also develop their potential through extracurricular activities like arts, sports, and santri organizations.

Regular class students delivered:

"The regular class also has many activities. We are taught religion and participate in extracurricular activities, too. The difference is that friends in the superior class focus on one field."

This strategy reflects the customer-focused differentiation approach in education strategic management,[12] where institutions provide services relevant to learners' diverse needs without compromising the principle of equity. By equalizing costs and access, madrasas maintain the integrity of social justice in Islamic education.

However, this model still needs to be evaluated regularly. According to alums who are lecturers in education management, as follows:

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[10] Iskandar Tsani, "Evaluasi Pembelajaran Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Di Sekolah Dasar Plus Rahmat Kediri Perspektif Logic Model" 9, no. 2 (2024): 119–42, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v9i2.9189.

[11] Muthoharoh, Umamatul Khaeriyah, and Neily El -'Izzah, "Developing Religious Moderation in Millennial Santri : A Case Study at Ma ' Had Al-Jami ' Ah UIN" 10, no. 1 (2025): 1–24, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v10i01.11130.

[12] Abdul Haris, *Manajemen Stratejik* (Zifatama Jawara, 2023).

"It is important to ensure that the flagship class model does not create a stigma or a hidden social class. If the narrative is not maintained, there could be a perception that regular classes are normal."

From the perspective of hidden curriculum theory[13,14], differences in class structure can create hidden values among students, such as a sense of inferiority or a perceived prestige hierarchy. Therefore, the role of teachers and madrasah management is essential in maintaining the narrative that each class has the same value and contribution to students' character and academic development.

Overall, this strategy is a form of innovation that maintains the madrasah's competitiveness amid the dynamics of education globalization. By balancing service quality and accessibility, this madrasah shows that differentiation is not always synonymous with economic segmentation but rather a form of adaptation to the needs of diverse learners without losing the inclusive Islamic spirit.

Place-Based Education in Madrasah Branding

MTs Al Amiriyyah within the Darussalam Blokagung Islamic Boarding School is a strategic advantage that shapes the institution's identity. Integrating formal education and pesantren tradition in one educational ecosystem strengthens students' Islamic values and creates a uniqueness that becomes the main attraction in the madrasah branding strategy. In this context, location is not just a geographical setting but a symbol of the authenticity of Islamic education that is alive and deeply rooted in local culture.

Place-based education can assess this advantage[15], where the local environment is a source of values, meanings, and learning strategies. MTs Al Amiriyyah successfully applies this approach, making the pesantren a value base and differentiation. Students not only access the national curriculum but also live in a profoundly spiritual atmosphere, following the recitation of books, praying in congregation, and habituating santri morals. This creates a learning ecosystem that forms a holistic religious character formation.

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[13] bazikrika et al., "Applying Positive Psychology Principles in Islamic Education : A Conceptual Review with Islamic Educational" 9, no. 2 (2024): 87–118, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v9i2.4202.

[14] Mulyadi Mulyadi, Mahfida Inayati, and Maimun Maimun, "Jenis-Jenis Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Telaah Tentang Written Curriculum And Hidden Curriculum," *Jurnal Lentera: Kajian Keagamaan, Keilmuan Dan Teknologi* 23, no. 1 (2024): 98–112, https://doi.org/1416.

[15] Mohammad Alvi Pratama and Eva Laila Rizkiyah, "Ecosophy Foundation With Place-Based Education Model Clinical Legal Education," *Iblam Law Review* 2, no. 2 (2022): 129–40, https://doi.org/1052249.

However, the success of this pesantren-based branding is not free from challenges. When pesantren identity becomes a selling point highlighted in promotional strategies, the potential for commodification of religion arises, where spiritual values are reduced to mere educational marketing tools[16,17]. If not managed ethically, this process can obscure the meaning of religious education itself, which is to form pious people sincerely, not because of market demands.

However, MTs Al Amiriyyah seems to be aware of this risk. The head of the madrasah emphasizes that the main objective remains moral development and strengthening the basics of religion, not merely imaging. In an interview, one of the teachers said:

"Our branding is not for commercialization. Instead, we want to present the face of Islamic education that is strong in values, not just academically strong."

By maintaining its identity as a pesantren-based madrasah, MTs Al Amiriyyah strengthens its position as an institution that preserves the local wisdom of Javanese Islam. Others do not easily replicate this cultural capital[18,19]. Religious activities such as mbalah kitab, manaqiban, and recitation of Al-Barzanji, as well as strengthening the tradition of *sowan to kyai,* become instruments for forming an authentic collective identity. The views of senior teachers reinforce this:

"We don't just make students smart; they also know how to behave towards teachers and clerics. That's what makes parents trust us."

In the context of education branding, this strategy aligns with Kotler & Fox's value-based positioning approach, which emphasizes values that resonate with the target.[20,21] Here, the education market is not only the general public but

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[16] Akhmad Nurul Kawakip and Sulanam, "The Practice Of Shared Values And Islamic Educational Identity Evidence From A Pesantren In East Java, Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 17, no. 1 (2023): 27–53, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2023.17.1.27-53.

[17] Abd Warits, "The Implementation of the Doblin Innovation Model in Strengthening Competitive" 9, no. 2 (2024): 69–86, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v9i2.4202.

[18] Saepudin Mashuri, Sauqi Futaqi, and Ahmad Sulhan, "Spiritual Base of Pesantren for Building Multicultural Awareness in Indonesia Context," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 24, no. 1 (2024): 1–20, https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i1.17141.

[19] Mega Selvi Maharani and Yessi Rahmaniar, "Moderasi Beragama Pada Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Madrasah," *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (2023): 51, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v8i1.6436.

[20] Panduaji Panditatwa, "Bauran Pemasaran Sektor Jasa Pendidikan Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Swasta Di Jawa Tengah" (Universitas Islam Indonesia, 2024).

[21] Nurul Ariza, "Penggunaan Teknologi Dalam Pengembangan Asesmen Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam" 9, no. 1 (2024): 25–44, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v9i1.8840.

also traditional Muslim communities who consider the continuity of Islamic values inherited from pesantren important.

The impact is quite significant. According to the madrasah's internal data, the number of applicants has increased over the past three years, exceeding the available capacity. This shows the madrasah's success in building a strong image, not only as a place to gain knowledge but also as a space to inherit the values and identity of Islam Nusantara.

However, pesantren-based branding still needs to be mitigated from value exclusivism. The challenge is maintaining openness to modern educational innovations without losing traditional roots. This requires madrasahs to adapt selectively, balancing local values and global demands.

The service differentiation model and the place-based education approach at MTs Al Amiriyyah open space for academic discussions on how Islamic education can compete without losing its value roots. Theoretically, this strategy challenges the dichotomy between tradition and innovation. It encourages a redefinition of educational quality measured by academic achievement and the depth of integrity of values.[22,23]

In practical terms, this strategy provides direction for other madrasahs: that excellence does not have to be exclusive, and branding does not have to mean commercialization. Equal access between classes sets an important precedent in maintaining educational equity, while the integration of pesantren culture strengthens the madrasah's position as a space for collective character-building.

Digital Branding Strategy in Pesantren Institutions

The use of social media by MTs Al Amiriyyah is a strategic move that cannot be separated from the context of competition among educational institutions. Despite being in a pesantren environment with a conservative approach to technology, this madrasah utilizes platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to communicate with the public. This aligns with Kotler & Fox's concept of cost-effective marketing in education, where institutions use media with a broad reach but low cost to build them.[24]

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[22] Sofwan Jamil, "Tradisi Dan Inovasi Dalam Pendidikan Islam: Menjaga Identitas Di Zaman Modern," *Wistara: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra* 2, no. 1 (2021): 90–93, https://doi.org/10.23969/wistara.v2i1.11237.

[23] Ariza, "Penggunaan Teknologi Dalam Pengembangan Asesmen Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam."

[24] Ni Putu Sinta Dewi Falimu Lukman, Abdul Majid Suhaimi Wina Puspita Sari, and Abdul Kholik Mulyadi Yuli Evadianti, *Manajemen Humas* (Cv. Azka Pustaka, 2023).

This decision is not merely technical but reflects the dynamics between religious values and demands for visibility. Account management is carried out by the madrasah's internal team, with content featuring learning activities, student achievements, and spiritual activities. Functionally, this strengthens the madrasah's connection with parents and the wider community[25],[26].

As stated by the madrasah staff:

"We want to show that education in pesantren is not rigid. Through social media, parents and the community can directly see the development of their children."

However, this approach also opens room for criticism. An image of santri life and religious practices in the form of digital content can give birth to what is referred to as simulacra[27],[28], Jean Baudrillard's theory quoted from Taufiq's research, et al.[29] Simulacra is the creation of an image that is detached from its original meaning. When spiritual aspects are displayed continuously for public consumption, there is a risk of commercialization of religious symbols, where the logic of the digital market can reduce the value of sincerity and simplicity of pesantren.

This phenomenon reflects a dilemma in the branding management of Islamic institutions: maintaining the integrity of values while meeting the demands of openness and competition. Studies show that social media can be a participatory space that strengthens the institutions and its community's relationship[30]. However, in the context of pesantren, this approach requires a

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[25] Moh Wardi et al., "Implementation of Religious Moderation Values Through Strengthening Diversity Tolerance in Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2023): 241–54, https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v9i2.27952.

[26] Muhamad Parhan et al., "Tantangan Mendidik Generasi Muslim Milenial Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 Untuk Menciptakan Lingkungan Pendidikan Islam Modern," *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2022): 171, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v7i2.4294.

[27] Pericles 'asher' Rospigliosi, "Metaverse or Simulacra? Roblox, Minecraft, Meta and the Turn to Virtual Reality for Education, Socialisation and Work," *Interactive Learning Environments* 30, no. 1 (2022): 1–3, https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2022.2022899.

[28] Esben Langager Olsen and Johan Simonsen Abildgaard, "The Figural Space of the Business Simulacrum: Examining an Educative Change Management Simulation," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 15, no. 5 (2022): 634–51, https://doi.org/10.1080/17530350.2022.2085141.

[29] Theguh Saumantri, Taufik Hidayatulloh, and Dhea Dayuranggi Meghatruh, "Konsumerisme Beragama Di Era Digital: Analisis Paradigma Postmodernisme Jean Baudrillard Terhadap Fenomena Beragama Umat Islam Di Indonesia," *Islamadina : Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 24, no. 2 (2023): 273, https://doi.org/10.30595/islamadina.v0i0.14961.

[30] Mohammad Herli and Bambang Tjahjadi, "The Role of Social Media as a Voluntary Intellectual Capital Disclosure in Universities: Evidence from Indonesia," *Intangible Capital* 18, no. 2 (2022): 247–62, https://doi.org/10.3926/ic.1505.

strong ethical framework so that social media does not merely become a tool of impression but an educational space rooted in Islamic values.[31]

Thus, MTs Al Amiriyyah's utilization of social media should be viewed not just as a technical innovation but as a complex strategy that demands a balance between the needs of public communication and the preservation of spiritual values. In the future, the challenge is not only how to expand the reach of promotion but also how to maintain the authenticity of the message of Islamic education amid digitalization.

The phenomenon of social media use by MTs Al Amiriyyah has significant strategic implications in the study of Islamic education communication and value-based institutional management. Academically, this practice demands an expansion of the theoretical framework regarding the relationship between digital media and the construction of the identity of religious institutions. The classic approach to pesantren institutions as closed entities needs to be revised with a more complex and dynamic model recognizing that digitalization is not just a technical instrument but a new arena for producing meaning, symbolic representation, and mediation of Islamic values. This context opens a gap for dialogue between institutional branding theories.

Practically, the use of social media in the context of pesantren-based madrasas raises critical questions related to digital media governance: who controls the narrative, how content is curated, and to what extent the value of sincerity as a key ethos in pesantren education is maintained in a digital space that tends to be performative. Implementing a cost-effective marketing strategy in a religious context requires an epistemic balance between communication efficiency and ethical value delivery. For this reason, an internal policy framework is needed to achieve impressions, educational indicators, and spiritual sustainability.

Integrated Financing Model

MTs Al Amiriyyah has implemented an Integrated Sharia Payment system, a financing model that integrates all educational cost needs, including monthly tuition fees, extracurricular activities, and academic operations, into one payment channel through a virtual account. This system not only streamlines the administrative process but also provides financial transparency,

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[31] Erwin Kusumastuti et al., "Peran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Penggunaan Media Sosial Pada Era Society 5.0 Untuk Memperkuat Moderasi Beragama," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 3 (2024): 10, https://doi.org/10.47134/pjpi.v1i3.554.

which is essential in the context of public accountability of educational institutions.[32,33]

The madrasah treasurer stated:

"With the virtual account system, student guardians do not need to pay anything. Everything is in one package, and the details are clear. The recording is also automatic and neater."

The main advantages of this system lie in the standardization of costs and ease of monitoring, both by institutions and parents. However, this approach also has the potential to create a perception of the commodification of education, where religious values can be distorted in the logic of efficiency and transactions. Where value-laden social symbols and processes, such as Islamic education, can experience a loss of meaning if they are reduced to market services.[34]

However, in the context of MTs Al Amiriyyah, this potential has been anticipated through a policy of subsidies and scholarships, including waivers for students from underprivileged families and special discounts for siblings attending the same madrasah. This shows that the institution does not merely prioritize efficiency but still adheres to inclusiveness and social justice principles.

"If there are students from difficult families, they can usually apply for a waiver. We also provide discounted fees for younger siblings who study here," explained one of the foundation administrators.

Compared to similar studies, such as those highlighting financing models in urban private madrasas[35,36], the system at MTs Al Amiriyyah is unique because it successfully combines technology-based management with the local wisdom of pesantren. If managed with the principles of fairness and transparency, this system is not only a technical tool but also part of a strategy to empower Islamic

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[32] Norlaila Mazura Hj Mohaiyadin et al., "Addressing Accountability and Transparency Challenges in Waqf Management Using Blockchain Technology," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 8 (2022): 53–80, https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v8i0.1413.

[33] Ahmad Nur Hafid and Siti Aimah, "Customer Satisfaction As an Indicator of Service Quality In," *International Journal of Quality Research* 9, no. 4 (2024): 689–704, https://doi.org/peshum.v4i1.6839.

[34] Budi Johan et al., "Tantangan Dan Peluang Pendidikan Islam Dalam Konteks Modern," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 4 (2024): 13, https://doi.org/10.47134/pjpi.v1i4.758.

[35] Safiul Maghfuri et al., "Kompetensi Kepala Madrasah Dalam Manajemen Pembiayaan Pendidikan," *Journal of Educational Research* 2, no. 2 (2024): 301–14, https://doi.org/10.56436/jer.v2i2.244.

[36] Dedi Sahputra Napitupulu, "Pendidikan Islam Muslim Minoritas (Kasus Di Eropa Barat)" 5, no. 01 (n.d.), https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v4i2.891.

educational institutions to be more resilient and responsive to the challenges of the times.

The main challenge is maintaining a balance between modern management logic and the mission of da'wah and spiritual education. The current Integrated Sharia Payment System can be a model of good practice as long as the principles of inclusion, spiritual values, and management ethics guard it.

Berprestasi "Word of Mouth" Strategy from Achieving Alumni

The word-of-mouth phenomenon in education marketing has long been recognized as a powerful strategy for shaping public perception.[37,38] At MTs Al-Amiriyyah, this practice occurs organically through the contributions of alums who have successfully occupied strategic positions in society and the professional world. Although the madrasah does not explicitly run promotional programs that utilize alums, the institution's reputation is formed through the narratives of their success that are spread in the social space of the community. This aligns with Hafid's findings that informal interpersonal communication has a stronger power of influence than formal advertising in shaping consumers.[39,40]

An interview with one of the alums, who is now a lecturer at an Islamic university, revealed that:

"I am often asked by my neighbours' parents, 'Where did their children go to school? And when I answer MTs Al-Amiriyyah, they are immediately interested. It's a source of pride."

However, this phenomenon also demands critical review. When alum success is used as the leading benchmark in promotion, there is the potential for commodification of educational values. Islamic education, which is ideally oriented towards character building and the blessing of knowledge, could be displaced by the logic of prestige and social capital of alums. In this context, madrasahs need to be careful not to turn alum success into a mere promotional

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[37] Abdul Manap et al., "Manajemen Pemasaran Jasa: Konsep Dasar Dan Strategi" (CV. Eureka Media Aksara, 2023).

[38] Pasmah Chandra, "Peran Pondok Pesantren Dalam Membentuk Karakter Bangsa Santri Di Era Disrupsi" 5, no. 2 (2020): 243–62, https://doi.org/10.29240/belajea.v5i2.1497.

[39] Gert Jan Schoenmakers, Jihane Hachimi, and Helen de Hoop, "Can You Make a Difference? The Use of Informal Address Pronouns in Advertisement Slogans," *Journal of International Consumer Marketing* 36, no. 2 (2024): 99–114, https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2023.2215472.

[40] Ahmad Nur Hafid and Sidiq Purnomo, "Membangun Budaya Disiplin: Polah Komunikasi Interpersonal Kyai Kepada Santri" 1, no. 5 (2023): 30–36, https://doi.org/195.

instrument but rather maintain the essence of education as a process of spiritual and intellectual development.

When compared to Greenhow and Lewin's study, which states that the digital reputation of educational institutions is formed chiefly through online platforms[41], The case of MTs Al-Amiriyyah shows that the power of word of mouth is still relevant in the cultural context of pesantren communities that rely more on direct social relations than technology.

Thus, outstanding alums become strategic social capital in increasing the visibility of the madrasah. They also demand ethical reflection so that their achievements do not merely become a marketing tool but also an inspiration in strengthening the vision of Islamic education with integrity.

This finding emphasizes the need to expand Islamic education marketing theory that accommodates the power of social communication based on pesantren culture. Word of mouth can no longer be positioned as a side effect of promotion but as a social legitimization mechanism that works through a collective belief structure.

Madrasahs need to design alum management policies that do not stop at imaging but encourage their strategic participation in improving the quality of education. This approach ensures that alum success does not become a symbolic commodity but rather an integral part of the institution's transformation process on an ongoing basis. This finding emphasizes the need to expand Islamic education marketing theory that accommodates the power of social communication based on pesantren culture. Word of mouth can no longer be positioned as a side effect of promotion but as a social legitimization mechanism that works through a collective belief structure.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that marketing strategies integrated with Islamic values can contextually improve the image and competitiveness of madrasahs amid the dynamics of educational competition. The main findings show that MTs Al-Amiriyyah succeeded in applying the 7P marketing mix selectively and religiously, including through (1) strengthening Islamic value-based excellence programs as superior "products"; (2) a 'price' approach that considers the principles of blessing and affordability; (3) utilizing social media-based "promotion" channels and value-verified alumni networks; and (4) improving

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[41] Christine Greenhow, Cathy Lewin, and K Bret Staudt Willet, "Teachers without Borders: Professional Learning Spanning Social Media, Place, and Time," *Learning, Media and Technology* 48, no. 4 (2023): 666–84.

service quality through transparent administrative processes and responsive to the needs of santri guardians and the community.

This research's theoretical contribution lies in developing a new understanding of how marketing principles can be synergized with Islamic values in the context of educational institutions. Practically, this research provides managerial guidance for madrasah managers in designing marketing strategies that are not only competitive but also rooted in the institution's spiritual mission.

For further research, it is recommended that a comparative analysis be conducted between madrasas with different characteristics, as well as a more in-depth exploration of the effect of religious marketing strategies on public perception and increasing the number of students.

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