



STRATEGY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA TO INCREASE NEW STUDENT INTEREST

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Abstract:

Educational marketing management is a series of activities involving analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The purpose of this study was to determine: (1) educational marketing planning at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, (2) implementation of educational marketing at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, and (3) evaluation of educational marketing at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach and analysis. Data were collected through observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The subjects of the study were the principal and the Vice Principal for Public Relations of MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo. Based on the results of the study, educational marketing management at this school needs to be implemented with good management, both in planning, implementation, and evaluation. Planning at school is carried out through meetings or meetings with related parties to design programs that will be implemented in the future, including determining the time, place, and targets to be achieved. Implementation of educational marketing is carried out through various promotional methods, such as distributing brochures and socializing to target schools. The evaluation stage is carried out once every semester to ensure whether the implementation of marketing is in accordance with the initial plan or still needs adjustment.

Keywords: *Strategy, Marketing Management, social media*

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions are organizations that aim to conduct scientific research or manage activities in the field of education. In order for an institution to be considered good by the community, the management and administration of the institution must be well structured and neat. Schools as a form of formal education consist of large groups of individuals who require good management. Among them is educational marketing, basically educational marketing is a managerial process that aims to meet the needs and satisfaction of customers and the community, so that it can improve and ensure the sustainability of the development of the school (Lestari et al., 2024).

In educational marketing, there are three main things that need to be understood. First, the marketing mix, which is a strategy that combines various activities to find the right combination so that it can produce satisfactory results. Second, control of marketing elements that allow all aspects to be monitored and managed by the institution to communicate effectively with customers to meet their needs. Third, promotion and distribution, which are combined to reach the desired target market. These three elements are very important marketing tools for an institution, organization, or company, and are expected to be able to control and increase customer initiatives and satisfaction (M Dayat, 2019).

The main purpose of educational marketing is to provide information to the public about the products offered by educational institutions, so that it can increase their

interest and attraction. Marketing also aims to differentiate one educational institution's products from another, and to provide a more positive assessment from the public towards the products offered by the institution (Permadi, 2022).

In this millennial era, the competitiveness of educational institutions must continue to be improved, not only in the internal aspects of the institution, but also in its educational marketing strategy. The public, as customers of educational services, are looking for something different from the educational products that are generally offered. Therefore, educational institutions need to continue to update ideas and innovations so that the products or services offered are attractive and of high quality. Along with the development of the times, educational institutions must also be sensitive to problems in society, so that they can create products or services that are solutions to these problems. In addition, educational institutions need to provide products that are in accordance with the needs and interests of the community.

One of the educational marketing management strategies often used by educational institutions is to promote schools through the distribution of brochures, the installation of pamphlets or banners, introductions through teachers as educators, or even by visiting schools directly to obtain further information. Along with the rapid development of technology today, promoting educational institutions has become easier. One way is through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and various other platforms. By utilizing social media as a marketing strategy, educational institutions can convey information related to superior programs to the wider public (Mészáros, 2000). For example, MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo which utilizes social media to package information about their various advantages, which in turn makes it easier for institutions to attract more interest and attention from the public and prospective new students. Seeing the high use of social media by the public, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and websites, it is very appropriate to market educational institutions through these platforms.

Relevant research conducted by Aditia Fradito with the title of thesis Educational Marketing Strategy in Improving the Image of Islamic Educational Institutions (Multi-Case Study at SDI Surya Buana and MIN 41 Malang 2) (2020). Based on the results of his research, it can be concluded that: (1) Educational services focus on efforts to meet customer expectations and satisfaction, which can be seen from: a) the quality of academic services, b) the standards of teachers and school staff, c) the quality of graduates. (2) Marketing strategies are carried out through direct means (brochures, calendars, pamphlets, electronic and print media) and indirect means (Mawlid, Muharram, graduation events). (3) The impact of the marketing strategy is increased public trust, strong support and cooperation, and high customer loyalty (Fradito, 2016). Two, research conducted by Neneng Nurmallasari and Imas Masitoh (2023) with the title Strategic Management of Social Media-Based Educational Marketing at the Babakan Jamanis Islamic Boarding School Foundation. Based on the results of research conducted at the Babakan Jamanis Islamic Boarding School Foundation, it shows that the Jamanis Islamic Boarding School uses social media-based educational marketing strategies such as: Facebook, Instagram, websites, and YouTube by first identifying them in the community environment which then becomes an educational marketing strategy by highlighting the achievements of the institution (Nurmallasari & Masitoh, 2020). Three, research conducted by Septia Lidiani (2023) with the title of thesis on educational marketing management in increasing the interest of new students at State Vocational School 1 Teupu Tengah. From this research, it can be concluded that educational marketing planning at State Vocational School 1 Teupu Tengah is that: (1) the principal divides the duties and functions of each field in the school related to carrying out educational marketing. (2) implementation of educational marketing at State Vocational School 1 Teupu Tengah, namely the principal and all related fields of the school conduct socialization to schools that have previously been made in the form of power points. In addition, the school operator also uploads brochures on the school's social media and the school website. (3) evaluation of educational marketing at State Vocational School 1 Teupu Tengah is carried out once every 6 months or once a semester. All stages of

educational marketing planning have been carried out well (Septia Lidiani, 2022) .

Based on the results of initial observations, researchers are interested in a school that is experiencing a shortage of students. Every year, the number of students at the school is very difficult to attract new students, so that each year the number of applicants does not experience significant growth. Researchers noted that the views, appreciation, and participation of the community towards the school are still considered minimal. In fact, many people and prospective students prefer other schools to continue their junior high school/equivalent education. Even though there are other schools of the same level in the area, they still choose other schools over the school being observed.

One of the factors that caused the decline in the number of students in the school was the lack of school appeal and minimal promotion. The role of educational marketing management is very important in this case, because they must understand the needs of the community well. Therefore, school stakeholders need to develop an effective marketing strategy, including how to socialize the existence of the school to the community. This is important so that schools can avoid negative perceptions that may develop among the surrounding community.

Based on the research that I want to do, I am interested in taking the research location at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo. I took the research at that location because there was a gap in the school. I am interested in researching the school, where the number of students each year only increases slightly or can even decrease. So I am interested in researching and digging deeper into what causes this to happen, and how the marketing management strategy is to increase the interest of new students so that they are better known by the community.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher is interested in conducting research on the educational marketing management strategy carried out by MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, with the research title "Educational Marketing Strategy Through Social Media to Increase the Interest of New Students."

This research has several objectives, namely: 1. To find out the planning of educational marketing management strategies through social media to increase the interest of new students at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo 2. To find out how to implement educational marketing management strategies through social media to increase the interest of new students at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo. 3. To find out how to evaluate educational marketing management strategies through social media to increase the interest of new students at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach, which aims to explore and understand the meaning understood by individuals or groups related to social or humanitarian issues. According to Creswell in his book *Qualitative Research Methods* written by Adhi Kusumastuti and Ahmad Mustamil Khoiron, qualitative research involves several important steps, such as asking the right questions and procedures, collecting data from participants, analyzing data inductively from specific themes to more general themes, and interpreting the meaning of words found in the data. The methods usually used are interviews, observations, and use of documents (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2019).

In this study using the type of case study research (Case Studies). Case research is a process of collecting data and information in depth, detailed, intensive, holistic, and systematic about people, events, social settings, or groups using various methods and techniques and many sources of information to effectively understand how people, events, social settings operate or function according to their context. Case studies basically intensively study an individual or group that is seen as experiencing a particular case. The main emphasis in case studies is why individuals do what they do and how they behave in conditions and their influence on the environment (*EDUCATION*, nd) .

The object of this study is the management of marketing management strategies of MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo. This object was chosen because the institution attracts new students by using social media, although this has not been implemented properly.

Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research at the institution in order to find out the inhibiting and supporting factors in using educational marketing strategies through social media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1) Educational Marketing Planning at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo

Planning is an action or initial step taken in order to get results and for previously determined goals. From the planning there will be an implementation or action taken to get the desired results, after that it can be evaluated or assessed in order to see if there are any shortcomings from what has been implemented previously, and whether the initial plan has been carried out well or not.

Based on the results of research conducted at Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo obtained through interviews, documents, and documentation from the principal. That the marketing planning of education at the madrasah was prepared by involving cooperation with OSIM. The planning steps taken by the principal include collaboration with various related fields and the formation of a team to carry out educational marketing. In addition, the principal also designs goals and objectives aimed at schools that are the target of marketing.

Furthermore, according to the results of interviews with sources conducted by researchers with the Deputy Head of Public Relations of Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, the steps taken by the school in marketing education include, firstly, the school sending letters to target schools and secondly, conducting socialization and preparing tools and materials to present prospective students.

Planning is a step taken by every institution or organization that involves the process of designing and considering the steps to be taken along with the vision and mission of the institution or organization. This also applies to educational marketing planning, where every marketing plan that is prepared from the start must be based on the vision and mission that has been set. In addition, this planning also considers the strategy that will be taken to implement educational marketing with the aim of attracting public interest, especially new prospective students. The planning must also pay attention to market opportunities so that the planned process can run smoothly and achieve the desired results.

Strategic marketing theory according to David W. Cravens, he defines strategic marketing as a process of developing market-based strategies that always observe the changing business environment and a commitment to providing maximum satisfaction to customers. Strategic marketing focuses on organizational performance rather than increasing sales like traditional marketing (Almaida & Nugrahani, 2019).

The conclusion of David W. Cravens' theory of marketing strategy is that marketing strategy must continue to develop and adapt to changes along with the needs and satisfaction of customers or consumers. According to Cravens, customer satisfaction is the main priority, and good service will keep customers loyal and continue to choose the products or services offered, including in the context of education. In addition, marketing strategy is also more focused on improving the performance of educational institutions or organizations rather than just on efforts to increase sales of products or services.

According to Kotler and Fox, there are several models of strategic planning processes in educational marketing, namely strategic planning starting from environmental analysis activities, both internal, market, competitive, general and macro environment and continued by analyzing the resources owned and then formulating objectives, strategies, organizational design and system design. An educational institution must first analyze the current environment that will come in the development of its educational institution's marketing. Second, the institution must analyze the institution's main resources so that the institution understands what resources they must complete in order to compete with other educational institutions. Third, educational institutions must create educational institution goals and targets. Fourth, educational

institutions must review the missions they have set and choose effective financing strategies to achieve the goals and objectives that have been set. Fifth, the implementation of the strategy usually requires changes in the structure and information system, planning and control. If all components are carried out properly, then the educational institution is certain to be able to improve its performance (Indarsyah et al., 2023)

Based on Kotler and Fox's theory, it can be concluded that marketing strategy planning begins with an analysis of various aspects. Furthermore, the planning must have clear goals and directions that include resources, vision and mission, and financing. Thus, the educational marketing planning strategy can be implemented well and controlled. However, it is important to pay close attention to each component so that marketing planning can run effectively.

In educational marketing planning there are several stages in educational marketing planning, namely market identification, market segmentation, and product differentiation.

1. Market identification is a market condition, and seeing how and what the current market needs are. This market identification must also see the opportunities that will be needed by the community in general. According to the results of research conducted by researchers at Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo based on the researcher's sources, the current condition of the education market is not good. Where students only follow trends and follow friends. As if there is a school that is famous or more elite, then they will compete to enter that school. While many other schools are ready to accommodate and provide the best knowledge to students well.
2. Market segmentation is the division/division of potential consumers and divided into small groups. The purpose of this market segmentation is to find out and carry out marketing according to the characteristics, needs and desires of each consumer, then groups are formed according to what they need. According to the research results that researchers found at Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, this school does not use market segmentation/dividing consumer groups. This school accepts all prospective students regardless of their social status. This educational service market segmentation is certainly different from the sales product market segmentation. So, in every educational service, this school will definitely not differentiate or divide groups of educational consumers. And all of that goes back to each consumer. This school opens educational services that operate in the agricultural sector, more precisely in the field of food crop and horticulture agribusiness.
3. Product differentiation is a product or service that belongs to us and a product or service that belongs to someone else. So, if seen more specifically, an educational service offered by a school is different from the educational services available at other schools. According to the results of the research that researchers found in the field at Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, the school is the same as other schools in general. However, the existing educational marketing needs to continue to be improved to meet expectations.

Based on the results obtained by the researcher, in accordance with the stages of educational marketing planning that have been explained previously. The researcher found that Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo has not conducted an in-depth identification of the educational market. As a result, many prospective new students are less interested or less interested in registering, so that the school's appeal is still very limited. Furthermore, in terms of educational market segmentation which is the division of groups based on consumer needs and desires, the researcher saw that Mts ZaHa 3 Probolinggo did not conduct segmentation based on social level or student achievement. This school accepts students from various circles without distinguishing their social caste or academic achievement.

2) Implementation of Educational Marketing at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo

The implementation of educational marketing is a step or stage after previous planning. The implementation of educational marketing is more about the action that will be carried out, or carrying out the plan that has been prepared at the beginning. In the implementation of educational marketing, the entire school structure participates in carrying out marketing activities, but is still assigned to their respective duties.

In implementing school or madrasah marketing, there are several variables that need to be considered, both those that can be controlled and those that cannot be controlled. Uncontrollable variables include factors such as culture, economic conditions, and social trends. Meanwhile, controllable variables include curriculum or educational services that are in accordance with the needs of the institution, service location, communication with students, alumni, donors, and the amount of school fees that can support schools or madrasahs in providing good and efficient services to students.

In the implementation of educational marketing, there are several marketing mix points that can be used by experts, including product (educational product), price (educational price), place (educational location), promotion (educational promotion), person (educational resources), physical evidence of education, process (educational process) (Mamonto et al., 2021).

1. Product (educational product), in marketing educational services, the marketing product in question is a department or educational model that operates in a particular field. According to the results of research conducted by researchers at SMK Negeri 1 Teupah Tengah, the Vocational High School operates in the agricultural sector, more precisely the Food Crops and Horticulture Agribusiness Department.
2. Price (price of education), in the context of education the price of education is very influential. Moreover, this price of education is used and re-circulated into the school's cash to make improvements in the school, so that the school has good quality. However, there are also several institutions/organizations that do not calculate the price, the purpose is to ease the economic burden on the community, especially on consumers of educational services.

Based on the results of the study conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, it was found that the school did not charge education fees from consumers (parents or guardians of students). Examples of education fees that are usually applied in schools are tuition fees and committee fees. The results of the study showed that this school did not apply tuition fees to each student, as well as school committee fees.

3. Place (educational location), is the most important element in an educational institution/organization. Where education consumers can see how the road access to the institution is, and whether the location is easily accessible by education consumers, and education consumers can also see whether the location is strategic.

According to the research results that the researcher found, that the location of the MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo school is not strategic, because access to the entrance to the school is too far in, so that the community/consumers of education are not visible to them, if seen from the front of the highway the form of the school is not visible either. The school is a little far from the city. Although the billboard in front of the school hallway has been installed, many people still do not know the location of MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo.

4. Promotion (educational promotion), in every marketing there will definitely be promotion, or introducing the products we have to others so that there is a sale and purchase transaction and benefits from both parties. In the scope of educational marketing, this educational promotion is slightly different from other sales and purchase transactions, but in this educational promotion what will be promoted is the educational service.

Based on the results of research conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, this madrasah promotes education in various ways. One of them is by distributing

brochures to the community and prospective students. In addition, they also utilize social media such as Facebook and Instagram to disseminate information, as well as uploading brochures on the school website. Not only that, the school also conducts socialization to schools that are their targets, such as SMP (Junior High School), to introduce the school to prospective students. As part of the promotional efforts, they also invite prospective students to visit the school and see the available facilities firsthand.

5. Person (human resources), human resources referred to in the scope of marketing are educators and educational staff. These human resources play a very important role in the management of education. Good human resources will make an educational institution/organization of quality and quantity.

Based on the results of research conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, it was found that human resources (HR) at the school were still inadequate. Researchers noted that some teachers were rarely present in class or were absent during class hours. In addition, the condition of the education staff at the school also still seemed unorganized. For example, related to the management of school files, there was confusion in the division of responsibilities, so that the files were often not well organized. Instead of being stored in the Administration (TU) room, the files were archived separately by each party involved.

6. Physical evidence, in the world of education, physical evidence in question is school buildings and structures. Examples include office buildings, classrooms, and other buildings owned by the school.

Based on the results of the study conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, it was found that the physical condition of the school is very good and the building is still well maintained. The buildings in the school are in very good condition. This school is also equipped with various facilities, such as an office building, classrooms, an agricultural equipment building (for storing agricultural equipment), a dormitory building, a science laboratory room, a computer laboratory room, a prayer room, a canteen, a toilet, a guard post, a green house, a very large practice field, a warehouse, and a multi-purpose house owned by the school. In addition, the researcher also noted that the area of this school is very large, covering both the school yard and the existing buildings.

7. Process (educational process), the educational process is a process of ongoing learning and teaching, where teachers provide theory and practice to students so that they understand the content of the learning provided.

Based on the results of research conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, it was found that the educational process taking place at the school can still be said to be less than good. Researchers observed that some teachers were rarely present in class, and there were also teachers who only gave books to students to copy or take notes without providing in-depth learning during class hours. This often happens and causes the teaching and learning process to be less effective, thus impacting the quality of learning at the school.

Based on the description of the marketing mix presented by the experts, the researcher saw that MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo still did not fully understand the concept of the educational marketing mix. This school only understands and applies some of the elements of the educational marketing mix, especially in the promotion aspect. However, other aspects of the educational marketing mix have not been fully optimized at the school.

According to researchers, the application of the marketing mix theory (educational marketing mix) used by experts is very effective and efficient if applied properly. With proper application, the implementation of educational marketing will run smoothly and can increase the number of new students. Therefore, if each element in the educational marketing mix is considered and implemented properly, then optimal results in educational marketing can be achieved.

3) Educational Marketing Evaluation at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo

Evaluation is a process to assess and measure the extent to which an activity or design that has been implemented achieves the desired goals. Through evaluation, we can identify activities that have not been implemented according to the initial plan. The evaluation stage is the last step in an activity. This process is very important, because it provides an opportunity to make improvements and better planning in the future (Asrul et al., 2017).

In marketing we must be able to identify opportunities in the market. There are 2 things to consider:

1. Strengths and weaknesses

MOA (Marketing Opportunity Analysis) is a stage where analysis is carried out to obtain accurate information about competitors that will be faced in the market. With this data, we can evaluate and identify the strengths and weaknesses of competitors, and compare them with the quality of our own products or services.

2. Matching opportunities with company capabilities

Everything that happens outside the scope of an institution or organization can develop without limits. With the opportunity for free access, this can make it easier for institutions or organizations to manage assets and achieve visions that may be limited.

There are several stages in the evaluation, including annual control plans (monitoring), profitability control (community needs), marketing audits (marketing objectives).

1. The annual control plan (monitoring) is an evaluation conducted by stakeholders or principals to assess developments and achievements each year. At this stage, it is seen whether the benefits and targets that have been set are achieved or not. Based on the results of research conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, the principal there does not conduct an annual evaluation, but rather carries out an evaluation every 6 months or every semester. This evaluation includes teacher performance and other aspects.
2. Profitability control is the stage where we can evaluate whether the services and needs of the community have been met, and the extent to which marketing promotions have been implemented. Based on the results of research conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, the school has implemented various educational marketing models, such as distributing brochures, socializing with other schools, and interacting with the community. However, researchers noted that public interest in the majors offered at the school is still relatively low in the local environment.
3. Marketing audit, namely the principal must first be able to analyze the marketing objectives to whom and where they are carried out, and see how the marketing strategy used with the adaptation system in the marketing environment.

Based on the results of research conducted at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo, before starting educational marketing, the principal first sets clear goals, determines target schools, prepares a socialization schedule, and designs strategies to attract public interest, especially prospective students. The main target of this marketing effort is students who are in elementary school or MI. However, according to the researcher's findings, public interest, especially in the agricultural department, is still very low. Although the school has waived various fees, such as tuition fees, committee fees, and dormitory fees, the number of students at the MTs has not increased at all in 2023.

Based on the findings of researchers in the field at this evaluation stage, MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo still pays less attention to profitability control. Profitability control is an important aspect that needs to be considered to evaluate the extent to which promotion or marketing is running well. In addition, schools must also ensure that the promotion model carried out is in accordance with the target market. With controlled profitability control, all educational marketing activities will run more effectively and efficiently, and can achieve optimal results.

CONCLUSION

Educational marketing planning at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo is carried out by dividing the main tasks and responsibilities (tupoksi) to each related field in the school to carry out marketing activities. Furthermore, the school holds a meeting involving all related parties, such as the committee, teachers, educational staff, and other school communities. In the meeting, they jointly plan the steps to be taken, including determining the time, place, purpose, and target of the school's marketing activities, such as promotions and other activities. Before the implementation, the principal also sent a letter to the targeted schools to inform them that MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo would hold socialization at these schools.

The implementation of educational marketing at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo was carried out by involving the principal and all related parties. They conducted socialization to the targeted schools and made presentations about the school, which had previously been prepared in the form of PowerPoint slides. The school also made posters and brochures informing about the acceptance of new students, which were then distributed to the community, especially prospective new students. In addition, the school operator uploaded the posters and brochures on social media and the school's official website. As a form of support, the school also waived fees that could burden prospective students, such as tuition fees, committee fees, and other fees. The principal of MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo also invited the community and prospective students to visit the school, see the condition of the existing facilities. As part of the promotional activities, the principal and the public relations team distributed vegetable seeds to the community, and invited them to participate in various activities held by the school.

The evaluation of educational marketing at MTs ZaHa 3 Probolinggo is carried out every six months, or once every semester. All stages of educational marketing planning at this school have been carried out well. Evaluation reports on students are prepared and archived by the Vice Principal for Student Affairs in written form along with student data. Based on the research results obtained, many students choose to enter certain schools or departments simply because they follow their friends or because they are considered more "popular" in their eyes. In addition, the government or related agencies have not yet established a zoning system for accepting students, so prospective students in one area are free to choose to register at schools in other areas.

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