

Educational Service Pricing Strategies in the Perspective of Islamic Education Marketing Management

Mohammad Syarifuddin Amarullah^{1*}, Ahmad Nu'man Farisi², Anis Zohriah³,
Faizal Djabidi⁴

UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten

Corresponding Author: Mohammad Syarifuddin Amarullah

232625112.mohammad@uinbanten.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Determining the price of educational services is one of the strategic elements in education marketing management, especially in Islamic educational institutions that have a dual mission: to produce people with Islamic character while ensuring the sustainability of the institution. This article explores the fundamentals of education service pricing strategies, pricing strategy objectives, and relevant techniques. With a descriptive-qualitative approach, this study aims to provide practical and academic insights for managers of Islamic educational institutions in managing the price aspect as a strategic marketing instrument.

INTRODUCTION

Pricing in the world of education is an aspect that cannot be ignored, especially in Islamic educational institutions that combine scientific and religious missions. Price is not only a matter of numbers or nominal, but also reflects the value offered by the institution to the community. In the context of marketing management, price has a strategic role in building an image, attracting students, and ensuring the operational sustainability of educational institutions. (Yanto et al., 2023)

Islamic educational institutions have their own challenges in setting the price of their educational services. On the one hand, the price should be enough to cover the operational costs and long-term investments. On the other hand, pricing must not override the principles of social justice and accessibility for all levels of society. Therefore, managers of educational institutions need to integrate sharia values in the pricing process, so that they remain relevant to the mission of Islam and are able to compete in the education market. (Samsuri, 2022)

In order to formulate an effective pricing strategy, it is necessary to have an in-depth understanding of the various factors that influence price decisions. These factors include cost analysis, people's purchasing power, added value offered, and market conditions. In addition, inclusive approaches in pricing strategies, such as the implementation of cross-subsidies or scholarship programs, can be a solution to reach the underprivileged without compromising the sustainability of the institution. (Jofa Dini et al., 2024)

This article focuses on three main aspects of the education service pricing strategy, namely the foundation of the strategy, the main objectives, and the implementation techniques. By discussing these three aspects, it is hoped that the article can provide practical guidance for managers of Islamic educational institutions to set fair, competitive, and sustainable prices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In addition to being a financial consideration, pricing in educational institutions—especially Islamic ones—reflects the goals and principles of the organization. The following elements of pricing methods in Islamic education management are highlighted in the literature:

1. Using Price as a Tool for Marketing In marketing management, pricing is a strategic consideration. It involves more than just meeting operating expenses; it also involves communicating the importance and caliber of education. A reasonable and competitive pricing can draw in more students and improve the institution's reputation (Yanto et al., 2023).
2. Pricing Based on Sharia Principles Sharia principles, which place an emphasis on justice, utility, and transparency, serve as the foundation for Islamic educational institutions. Pricing must be accessible to all socioeconomic classes while avoiding exploitation and gharar (uncertainty) (Marzuki & Marzuki, 2024).
3. Finding a Balance Between Financial Sustainability and Social Justice Finding a balance between affordability and the requirement for financial sustainability is the problem facing Islamic organizations. In order to accommodate disadvantaged students while preserving operational stability,

tactics like cross-subsidies and scholarship schemes are frequently used (Samsuri, 2022).

4. Value-Based Pricing Research shows that pricing decisions are heavily influenced by the perceived value of education, which includes character development, Islamic-based curricula, and high-quality instruction. Schools must make sure that the cost is commensurate with the benefits offered to children and their families (Hidayat & Margono, 2023).
5. Competitiveness of the Market The climate in which Islamic educational institutions operate is competitive. Setting rates that are both enticing and representative of the institution's distinctive offers requires a careful examination of market trends and rivals' prices (Nurlina et al., 2023).
6. Price Inclusivity Broader access to education is encouraged by inclusive pricing schemes like sliding scales based on income levels. This is consistent with the Islamic precept that all societal segments should have access to education (Gultom & Pardede, 2023).
7. Creative Methods of Pricing In order to increase the attraction of education services without sacrificing revenue, strategies including psychological pricing, bundling, and discounts are being employed more and more. By using these tactics, schools can continue to draw in potential students and their families (Melia Wati & Ali Alam, 2022).

Effective pricing methods in Islamic educational institutions must incorporate social, religious, and economic principles, according to the literature. By doing this, organizations can fulfill their dual goals of maintaining financial stability and providing high-quality Islamic education.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology in writing this article uses a qualitative method, namely the data used is the output of transformations and descriptions from observations, interviews and writing materials, both obtained through the internet and personal collections. Thus, it can be said that to get reading sources or references, researchers use library research. Qualitative research serves as a human tool to identify, focus, choose informants as data sources, evaluate the quality of the data, analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions from the data (Sugiyono, 2019).

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Foundations of Education Service Pricing Strategy

The strategy of determining the price of educational services in Islamic educational institutions must be based on fundamental values that reflect the mission and vision of Islamic education. This foundation is a foothold for managers in formulating fair, competitive, and sustainable price policies. (Alfian & Ilma, 2023)

The main foundations include:

1. Sharia Values Sharia principles such as justice, maslahat (utility), and trust are the main basis for determining prices. In this context, prices must be set by considering the balance between the ability of the public to pay and the need for institutions to continue operating optimally. In addition, the price

imposed must be transparent and do not contain elements of gharar (uncertainty) or exploitation of students and their families. (Marzuki & Marzuki, 2024).

2. **Cost and Value Added Analysis** Cost analysis is the technical basis for setting prices. Operational costs, such as salaries of educators, maintenance of facilities, procurement of teaching materials, and extracurricular activities, must be carefully calculated. In addition, the added value provided by the institution, such as the quality of teaching, Islamic-based curriculum, and character development of students, is also an important consideration. The price set must reflect the benefits felt by the student and his or her family. (Hidayat & Margono, 2023).
3. **Market Review and Competitiveness** Understanding market conditions is a strategic aspect in determining prices. Islamic educational institutions need to conduct a survey of the rates that apply in similar institutions, both at the local and regional levels. By understanding the competitive position, institutions can set prices that are not only competitive, but also reflect the uniqueness and values carried. (Nurlina et al., 2023).
4. **The Principle of Inclusivity and Social Justice** underscores the importance of educational accessibility for all segments of society. Inclusive pricing allows institutions to reach students from various socioeconomic backgrounds. For example, through the implementation of cross-subsidies, scholarships, or discounts for underprivileged families, institutions can ensure that education remains accessible without sacrificing the principle of justice. (Gultom & Pardede, 2023).
5. **Balance between Social Mission and Financial Sustainability** Islamic educational institutions not only aim to produce a generation that excels academically and spiritually, but must also ensure their financial sustainability. Therefore, the pricing strategy must consider these two aspects in a balanced manner. Prices that are too low can interfere with operational sustainability, while prices that are too high can hinder public access. (Farisi et al., 2024).

With this strong foundation, Islamic educational institutions can ensure that the price policy implemented is able to support the achievement of educational goals, both in terms of quality and sustainability. (Pitri et al., 2022)

Educational Services Pricing Strategy Targets

The goal of the education service pricing strategy includes various stakeholders involved in the education process. These goals should be formulated taking into account the needs, expectations, and contributions of each group, so that the price set can support holistic and sustainable educational goals. (Zulfiah et al., 2023)

Here is a more detailed explanation of the main objectives:

1. **Parents and Guardians** As the parties directly responsible for financing education, parents and guardians are the main targets in the pricing strategy. The price of educational services must reflect a value that is proportional to the quality of the services provided. Transparency in pricing, including the

breakdown of costs and benefits obtained, is essential to building their trust and satisfaction. In addition, fair pricing must also pay attention to their financial ability so as not to limit access to education for children from families with different economic backgrounds. (Siti Lailatul Fitriyah, 2023).

2. Learners are the main beneficiaries of educational services. Although they are not directly involved in financing, their needs are at the core of the educational process. Therefore, the set price should ensure that learners obtain quality services, including facilities, learning programs, and extracurricular activities that support their academic and spiritual development. (Yuspiani & Hidayat, 2022).
3. Donors and Partners Islamic educational institutions often involve third parties, such as donors or strategic partners, to support the sustainability of their operations. The goal of the pricing strategy in this context is to establish policies that can increase the trust and contribution of donors. For example, pricing that reflects efficiency and accountability can be an attraction for donors to provide greater support. (Fathurrochman et al., 2021).
4. Government and Regulators In some cases, the government or education regulator has a role in supervising or providing subsidies to educational institutions. Therefore, the price set must be in accordance with applicable regulations and reflect transparency and accountability, so that the institution can receive continuous support from the government. (Asiah, 2023).
5. Local Community As part of society, Islamic educational institutions have a responsibility to make a positive contribution to the local community. The goal of the price strategy in this context is to ensure that the price set can support the existence of the institution as an inclusive and benefit-oriented educational center. (Ibrahim & Kholis, 2024)

By understanding these objectives, Islamic educational institutions can design pricing strategies that are not only oriented towards financial sustainability, but also reflect the social and Islamic missions they undertake. Inclusive, fair, and competitive pricing will be a key factor in achieving these goals. (Indriani et al., 2021)

Techniques for Determining the Price of Educational Services

Determining the price of education services requires a strategic and measurable approach to suit the needs of the institution and the expectations of stakeholders. Various pricing techniques can be used by Islamic educational institutions to ensure the prices set reflect fairness, competitiveness, and sustainability. (Sugeng, 2022).

Here are some techniques that can be applied in depth:

1. Cost-Plus Pricing: This technique calculates prices based on the total costs incurred by the educational institution plus a certain profit margin. The costs taken into account include the salaries of teaching staff, facility maintenance, learning materials, and other operational costs. This technique is simple and ensures that the institution is able to cover all operational costs while earning profits for the development of the institution. However, this approach must

- be balanced with an understanding of people's purchasing power in order to remain competitive. (Sari et al., 2023).
2. **Value-Based Pricing** In this technique, prices are determined based on the value perceived by customers (parents, guardians, or students) of the educational services provided. These values include the quality of teaching, the reputation of the institution, the facilities available, and the Islamic values taught. This approach puts customer satisfaction as a top priority, so that the price set can reflect the quality and uniqueness of the institution. (Muslimin et al., 2020).
 3. **Sliding Scale Pricing** This technique allows price adjustments based on the financial ability of parents or guardians. Institutions can classify students into several categories based on family income level, so that groups that can afford to pay higher prices can help subsidize the less fortunate. This technique reflects the principles of justice and inclusivity in Islamic education. (Untung & Afiqoh, 2023).
 4. **Market-Oriented Pricing** Pricing is determined by taking into account market conditions and the average rates applicable at similar educational institutions. This technique helps institutions stay competitive in the midst of competition. A comprehensive market analysis is necessary to ensure that the set price can appeal to learners without sacrificing the quality of service. (Rizaldi & Aliyyah, 2024).
 5. **Psychological Pricing** This technique utilizes the customer's psychological perception of a certain number. For example, set a price of IDR 9,950,000 instead of IDR 10,000,000 to create a more affordable price impression. This approach can be used to influence customer perception without compromising the value actually received. (Melia Wati & Ali Alam, 2022).
 6. **Discount Pricing** Provides discounts or discounts in certain situations, such as early bird registration, full prepayment, or for families with more than one child attending the same institution. This technique not only eases the burden on parents, but also increases the attractiveness of the institution in the eyes of the public. (Elizabeth, 2022).
 7. **Bundling Pricing** This technique combines several educational services in one package at a specific price. For example, prices that include tuition fees, uniforms, textbooks, and extracurricular activities. This technique makes it easier for parents to plan their finances while increasing the perceived value of the services offered. (Nelsye Lumanauw et al., 2023).
 8. **Dynamic Pricing** Pricing is subject to change based on demand, seasonality, or specific situations. For example, prices for special education programs or additional courses held at a specific time may differ from regular prices. This technique provides flexibility for institutions in adapting services to customer needs. (Ernawati et al., 2022)

By combining the above techniques, Islamic educational institutions can set prices that are not only market-relevant but also reflect Islamic values. A flexible and innovative approach to pricing will support the sustainability of the institution while providing maximum benefits to the community. (Yusuf, 2023)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The determination of the price of educational services in Islamic educational institutions requires a strategic approach, based on Islamic values, and considering various managerial and social aspects. The foundation of the pricing strategy which includes sharia principles, cost analysis, market review, inclusivity, and balancing social missions with financial sustainability is the main guideline in this process. The target of the pricing strategy includes key stakeholders, such as parents, learners, donors, regulators, and local communities, who demand fairness, transparency, and accessibility of education services.

Pricing techniques, such as cost-plus pricing, value-based pricing, sliding scale pricing, and market-oriented pricing, provide flexibility for institutions to set competitive and sustainability-oriented pricing policies. In addition, innovative approaches such as bundling pricing, discount pricing, and dynamic pricing can be used to increase the attractiveness of the institution without compromising the quality of service.

By integrating the right foundations, goals, and techniques, Islamic educational institutions can set prices that reflect the added value provided, support inclusive educational missions, and ensure operational sustainability. This overall strategy is expected not only to increase the competitiveness of the institution, but also to make a real contribution to creating an empowered society through quality and affordable education.

The determination of the price of educational services in Islamic educational institutions requires a strategic and oriented approach to sharia values. With a strong foundation, clear goals, and the right techniques, educational institutions can ensure sustainability while providing maximum benefits to society. In practice, managers need to continue to review market dynamics and stakeholder needs so that the pricing strategy remains relevant and effective.

Recommendations

Islamic educational establishments should refrain from exploitative tactics and base their pricing strategies on Sharia law, with an emphasis on justice, equity, and the public interest. Value-based pricing, scholarships, and cross-subsidies are among tactics that can be used to accommodate a range of socioeconomic backgrounds without sacrificing long-term financial viability. Regular dialogue and open contact with stakeholders build trust, and the Triple Bottom Line structure and continuous market research guarantee that social and competitive objectives are fulfilled.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

The need for future research to expand to diverse contexts, collect solid data, test theoretical approaches, and investigate novel solutions like technology integration to improve effectiveness and sustainability is highlighted by limitations like scope, data availability, cultural differences, and untested strategies.

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