Evaluation of Marketing Strategies for Educational Services in Increasing Public Interest

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ABSTRACT

Education today is a necessity for every individual, society, and government. A marketing strategy is a plan carried out by the company in order to achieve its goals. These goals are determined by three elements: consumers, satisfaction, and the marketing mix. Marketing in educational institutions aims to provide information to the public about educational products and differentiate school products from those of other madrasas. This research is a type of qualitative research. The informants in this study were four people, consisting of the principal, vice principal of student affairs, parents of students, and the community around the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah. The marketing strategy carried out by the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah is good, boasting several indicators, namely madrasah promotion through social media, excellent programs, student achievement, tuition fees, school infrastructure, learning methods, and learning media used.

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INTRODUCTION

A marketing strategy is a plan that an organisation or company uses to achieve a goal. This goal is determined by three factors: customers, customer happiness, and the marketing mix. Customers are the key element of marketing strategy, which means that organisations must select or decide on consumers, as well as discover consumer needs, in order to develop the optimal combination of marketing mix while considering various aspects of the environment. According to research findings (Tyagita, 2016), the marketing strategy of educational institutions must differentiate themselves from their competitors by providing better services, superior goods and superior instructor performance, among others, of high quality.

Madrasah educational institution is an Islamic-based educational institution located in Indonesia. Therefore, madrasah management must be able to design its madrasah marketing strategy in order to carry out its educational mission. Educational marketing seeks to educate the public about educational goods and differentiate school products from other madrasahs. Marketing in educational institutions is a growing field. (Sunyoto, 2015).

Marketing is a critical component of the sustainability of any company. The majority of entrepreneurs believe that marketing is limited to the promotion of things created in terms of sales. The service product provided by non-profit educational institutions is education, but its implementation is not carried out conventionally and requires certain qualities in order to compete at the international level in terms of education.

Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo has become part of the Indonesian government to partner with a number of organisations in improving education in this country. To be precise, the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah is a private madrasah under the auspices of the Roudlotul Ilmi Foundation located in Tambaksumur village. Although there are many madrasahs, and the emergence of an Islamic schools based in Islam, but seen from the graph of student enrolment in Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo experiencing ups and downs every year. It can be concluded from the information the author obtained, the amount of competition between public schools and madrasah is increasingly felt because of the assumption of the community that madrasah is a second-class educational institution. Madrasah needs to develop its image in order to be recognized by the public as an Islamic quality educational institution, and on a larger scale it is expected that madrasah can compete with other educational institutions.

From the description of the background, this research focuses on Evaluating Marketing Strategies and Increasing Public Interest in Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo which is described in a research question described as follows: 1) How to evaluate the marketing strategy of educational services at Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo? 2) What are the constraints of educational services marketing strategy in increasing public interest in Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo?
LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Marketing Strategy

According to Ahmad S. Adnanputra (2008: 133) strategy is "‘planning’ a fundamental aspect of the management process, and therefore an integral part of any plan". According to Venkatesh and Penaloza (2017: 3), marketing is a series of actions taken by businesses to encourage demand for their goods or services and to ensure that goods are sold and delivered to customers. Based on some of the experts' suggestions above, it can be concluded that marketing strategy is the planning of a company or organization carried out by stimulating marketing activities to ensure that its products or services are delivered to customers.

According to Benty and Gunawan (2015: 20), marketing in commercial and industrial areas focuses on the act of managing exchanges between producers and customers. Marketing in commercial and industrial industries is defined as follows: In contrast to marketing, in education there are activities that place a high value on the relationship between the madrasah and its students and customers. Customer happiness is a function of marketing, in other words. If customers are not satisfied, it indicates that the marketing approach applied is less effective. Davies and Ellison in Benty and Gunawan (2015) state that marketing is a school activity used to organize and promote the school's goals, values, and goods to students, parents, and the general public.

It can be concluded from the description above that in a marketing activity, it is expected that students, guardians of students and the surrounding community are more familiar with the nature and development of madrasah as a whole. Because it is the duty of schools and other educational institutions to promote their educational services and offerings to the public by providing high quality services.

Marketing Objectives of Educational Services

According to the perspective of Kotler and Fox in a book written by David Wijaya (2012: 16-17), the main objectives of marketing educational services are to achieve the following results:
1) Ensure that school goals are achieved with outstanding success and great success.
2) Customer satisfaction with educational services is being improved.
3) Interest in educational materials is expected to grow.
4) Increase the effectiveness of marketing initiatives for educational services by using technology.

Basic Concepts of Educational Services Marketing

In general, the concept of marketing education services includes the following elements: customer needs, wants and demands, products (goods, services and ideas), value and cost, exchange, relationships and networks, markets, and marketers and potential customers. There are four levels of basic
human needs, according to the book "Motivation and Personality" by Abraham Maslow (1954), and can be seen as follows:
1) The need to survive (physiological needs). Clothing, food, and shelter are examples of how these needs manifest in the real world. These are essential needs to fulfil psychological and biological requirements.
2) There is a requirement for safety. This need manifests itself in various ways, including the need for mental security, the desire for material security, pensions, and long-term care insurance.
3) Needs at the social level (social needs). Some manifestations of these needs include the desire to be accepted by others (sense of belonging), the desire to thrive and not fail (sense of success), and the ability to be involved in activities (sense of participation).
4) The greater the desire for rewards (the greater the need for rewards), the greater the need for recognition, with this being represented in various ways such as command levels, luxury cars, air-conditioned work environments, and so on.

Marketing Strategy for Educational Services

The success of Islamic education marketing also depends on how leaders think about what future education marketing goals are, so that they can create educational institutions, students, staff, and employees to welcome the future of the institutions they lead. An educational leader is defined as being responsible for all educational and teaching activities in a school according to Yusak Burhanudin (1998:97). Besty-Ann Toffler and Jane Imber (2002:658) define educational marketing as the practice of advertising educational products or services to prospective students. The marketing approaches proposed by the experts above are techniques developed by thought leaders in the field of educational marketing to increase the interest and number of students who want to pursue a career in educational institutions, as described above.

According to the marketing mix (Diniaty et al., 2019) are variables aspects of the situation that can be utilised by managers to influence consumer purchasing choices. The variables of the marketing mix are as follows: product, price, location, promotion, people, physical evidence, and procedures (or a combination of all of them). It takes a completely different attitude to use marketing techniques in education services; one must be able to understand the activities of madrasahs in terms of the demands of education services clients before marketing tactics can be applied. According to marketing experts, the following are several types of marketing mix:

a) According to (Hurriyanti, 2010), a product is anything defined that an organisation can provide for sale and use to meet market demand or desire.
b) As defined by (Hurriyati, 2010), price is a financing strategy that balances expenses with the income of education service customers to set the price charged to education service customers.
c) What is meant by "location" is the choice made by the education service provider where operations and employees will be located as well as the
ease of access, appearance, and general condition of the madrasah, according to (Hurriyati, 2010).

d) The capacity to convey the advantages of the goods obtained by the madrasah to potential madrasah customers is defined by (Hurriyati, 2010) as "promotion", which is a kind of marketing communication in which actions are designed to influence or convince consumers. Personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing are some aspects of marketing promotion.

e) The term "people" refers to human resources controlled by the organisation or business involved for a process of providing goods or services to customers. (Hurriyanti, 2010) People are defined as those involved in a process of providing educational services, such as administrators, madrasah heads, teachers, and other teaching staff and workers. In madrasah institutions, the resources of educators and education personnel.

f) The definition of physical evidence given by (Hurriyati, 2010) is an environment that is actually built to engage with educational services and users of educational services and which is used to convey service functions to users of educational services, to the general public.

g) Process Educational Services, To regulate the marketing of educational services, according to (David Wijaya: 77-78), the operational system of educational institutions must regulate the division of tasks to coordinate and obtain resources for marketing educational services.

Public Interest in Madrasah

Sadikman (1990:76) asserts that when an item is right on target and relevant to the aspirations and needs of the individual concerned, then a person's interest in the item will be clearer. Meanwhile, Ahmad D Marimba (1980: 288) states that interest is a mental tendency to experience interest in something that is usually accompanied by emotions of pleasure towards an object, I believe that it is a mental tendency towards the object.

According to Selo Soemardjan (cited in Soerjono Soekanto, 2006: 22), culture is produced by humans who live together and who have the same territory and identity. They share habits, customs, attitudes, and sentiments of togetherness linked together by shared characteristics. Wahyu quotes Rolphlinton as saying that a social union is any group of people who have lived and worked together for a sufficient period of time for them to see themselves as a social union.

METHODOLOGY

This type of research uses a qualitative approach. According to Kirl and Miller (1986:9), it basically rests in the special tradition of the social sciences for observations made by humans, both in terms of subject matter and vocabulary used.

The population of this research is the Head of Madrasah, Deputy Head of Student Affairs, Parents of Students and the Community. According to Sugiyono (2001: 57). The basis of sampling in this study is nonprobability,
namely how the sampling is determined by the researcher himself or based on expert judgment by using purposive sampling. So, the sample in this study were four people.

Data collection techniques through a) Observation; According to Spardley in Sugiono's book, the observed qualitative research object is referred to as a social situation, and it consists of three components. b) Interview; Nazil in Asnawi and Masyhuri (2011) defines interview as the process of collecting information using a tool known as an interview guide to conduct face-to-face questions between the interviewer and the respondent (interview guide). c) Documentation; Quoting Asnawi and Masyhuri (2011), documentation is defined as the search for information about objects or variables that can be found in notes, transcripts, books, newspapers and magazines as well as minutes of meetings or agendas, among other forms of data collection.

Data sources were obtained a) Primary Data, for this research was collected directly from informants, including the Head of Madrasah, Homeroom Teachers, Student Guardians, and the local community, all of whom participated in the research. b) Secondary Data, according to Sugiyono's opinion (2015: 3) is indirectly providing data sources to data collectors, such as through other people or documents, but indirectly. File archives, papers, photos, and reports, as well as other supporting information are used in secondary data sources for this research.

Data Analysis and Validity; Data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing are all stages of the data processing process, according to the opinion of Miles and Huberman's theory taken from Sugiyono's book (2008: 337). Data validity techniques used in this research are degree of trust, persistence of observation, data triangulation.

RESULT

The Head of Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur in increasing public interest by cooperating between the foundation and teachers and the local community in order to increase competitiveness with other madrasahs. The competitiveness offered by MINU Tambaksumur in the education services business process uses marketing strategies so that public interest in MINU Tambaksumur increases. The increase in public interest can be assessed from the increase in the number of students who register each year. The number of students at Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur in 2021/2022 is 303 students. This number cannot be separated from the excellent strategic performance every year for this significant increase.

MINU Tambaksumur strives for improvement by highlighting the advantages of the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah. MINU Tambaksumur in implementing marketing strategies to increase the interest of prospective guardians and prospective students who will enroll in MINU Tambaksumur uses several advantages, namely accreditation, excellent programs, MINU Tambaksumur achievements, MINU Tambaksumur extra-curricular activities, facilities and infrastructure.
The observations made by researchers are observations based on observation guidelines consisting of two groupings of indicators, namely internal indicators sourced from informants who are daily at MINU Tambaksumur and external indicators derived from supporting informants who are outside MINU Tambaksumur. Observations were followed by interviews to obtain more in-depth information related to the research. Interviews regarding internal indicators were conducted with the Head of Madrasah and Deputy Head of Student Affairs while interviews regarding external indicators were conducted with parents of students and the community around MINU Tambaksumur.

DISCUSSION
a) Evaluation of Educational Services Marketing Strategy in Increasing Public Interest in Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo

Based on the results of the author's findings above that the information provided by the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah has been fulfilled, with the marketing team, the foundation, Mr and Mrs teachers working together to provide information and promotion of madrasah to kindergarten schools around Tambaksumur Village. This statement is reinforced by the theory (Davies and Ellison in Benty and Gunawan, 2015: 20-21) said in the field of marketing as a school activity to coordinate and promote its goals, values and school products to students, parents, staff and the wider community.

In the middle of the semester, the madrasah was preparing for the opening of new student admissions (PPDB) in December 2021, so the madrasah updated the previous strategy which always used printed media such as brochures, billboards, pamphlets and banners. Meanwhile, the new marketing strategy utilizes information technology that is currently rife, for example creating content for every madrasah activity on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram channels, in order to attract the public and be interested in this madrasah. Then, the indirect strategy carried out by the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah is to invite orphans and the surrounding community to the Isra’ and Mi’raj events of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and other activities held at MINU Tambaksumur, so that the madrasah tries to always improve educational services.

Promoting madrasah by talking about the quality of madrasah to the closest relatives or others. From the results of interviews with informants that they strongly agree in promoting madrasah by talking about its quality and advantages, because by talking about the quality and advantages possessed by madrasah indirectly there is a reciprocal question that people usually ask and the madrasah can answer it so that the person becomes aware and interested in sending their children to the MINU Tambaksumur madrasah. This statement is reinforced by the theory (Sardiman, 1990: 76) that a person's interest in an object will be more visible when the object is on target and related to the wants and needs of the person concerned.

In the teaching and learning process carried out at MINU Tambaksumur currently using the 2013 curriculum, the learning model uses project-based,
problem-based, and discovery-based. With this 2013 curriculum, students can be more active in teaching and learning activities and more enthusiastic about achieving achievements and potential in themselves and providing technological mastery skills. This statement is reinforced by the theory (Hurriyanti, 2010) of human resources owned by organizations or companies involved in the process of delivering products or services to consumers (students).

The promotion of educational services applied by Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur is through social media such as Instagram, YouTube and Facebook. In addition, promotion through whatsapp groups is also carried out by teachers and parents of students. MINU Tambaksumur collaborates with kindergartens in the Tambaksumur area through the promotion of new student admissions.

In the world of education, a character that is owned by students is very important, because this character education we supervise or strengthen the nature, attitude and behaviour of students. With this character education, it makes the teachers of MINU Tambaksumur to set an example with noble character, so that their students also have good morals, because this noble character is a basic capital for the development of individual students when they grow up and a sense of responsibility as the nation's successor.

With the advancement of current developments, the MINU Tambaksumur madrasah from 1962 to the present has experienced a very rapid development, the madrasah building used to be not that big and now a building with an area of 1447 m2 is formed. this is all due to the collaboration with the foundation, teachers, student guardians and students who are very synergized to advance the madrasah. Even though it is currently during the covid-19 pandemic in the acceptance of new students (PPDB), we must remain enthusiastic about continuing to advance the madrasah.

In general, educational facilities and infrastructure are a component needed by students to support the process of teaching and learning activities, this makes the MINU Tambaksumur madrasah to continue to improve the facilities and infrastructure at MINU Tambaksumur, with improved facilities and infrastructure, student learning becomes more interesting and enthusiastic.

One of the achievements of educational services is student achievement and school achievement. Basically, every student must have a myriad of potential in himself and also have their own advantages. So, the teachers at MINU Tambaksumur madrasah continue to instil in students that each of them is great. If this student has been able to find his potential, he can already win the championship. After winning the championship, they will be given an award and always given support to be able to improve their achievements.

Regarding the financing of the MINU Tambaksumur madrasah, it can be seen from the economy of the Tambaksumur Village community that it is quite capable. Therefore, the costs incurred by the madrasah are relatively cheap and very affordable. This is evidenced at the end of each semester, all guardians can pay off the entire school administration for the smooth learning
of their children. This is reinforced by the theory (Hurriyati, 2010) of financing that compares expenses with the income of customers of educational services and the determination of prices introduced to customers of educational services.

Educational services today in promoting schools use superior programs to attract the public. MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah as a religious-based school, in addition to providing general lessons also focuses on Islamic education. The community around MINU Tambaksumur has an interest in the excellent programs offered because MINU Tambaksumur offers religious activities carried out by students every day.

b) Constraints of Educational Services Marketing Strategy in Increasing Community Interest in Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo

The biggest obstacle in the process of marketing strategy of educational services in increasing public interest felt by Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo is school marketing activities require a lot of funds. Limited human resources and the implementation of marketing programs by teachers and related parties help in school marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic makes it a bit of an obstacle in the process of marketing educational services. The limited space for human resources in conducting madrasah promotions during the pandemic is a delay in realizing madrasah promotional activities.

Madrasahs in carrying out the marketing of their education programs well can win the competition that occurs between educational institutions. If marketing continues to be done well, the educational institution will be recognized by the wider community. So it will be easier to get students. In addition, marketing of educational services is also needed to show the existence of schools so as not to be abandoned by customers of educational services.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Some conclusions of the research results: a) The marketing strategy carried out by Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur boasts several indicators, namely madrasah promotion through social media, excellent programs, student achievement, tuition fees, school infrastructure, learning methods and learning media used. Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur in promoting the school uses social media, print media and testimonials from students and parents of students who attend Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur. Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur conducts infrastructure development to attract the interest of the community and prospective guardians of new students. Public interest in Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur in the last 5 years is stable as evidenced by the number of new students in PPDB not experiencing a significant decrease and increase. The education service strategy carried out by Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur is good as evidenced by the fact that Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur still has an existence until 2021 with the interest of the community who send their children to Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur; b) The biggest obstacle in the process of marketing strategy of educational
services in increasing public interest felt by Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur Waru Sidoarjo is school marketing activities require a lot of funds. Limited human resources and the implementation of marketing programmes by teachers and related parties help in school marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic makes it a bit of an obstacle in the process of marketing educational services. The limited space for human resources in promoting madrasah during the pandemic has delayed the realisation of madrasah promotion activities.

Some recommendations of the research results; a) For the Head of Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur. It is hoped that the results of this study can be an evaluation and input for the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah to improve school marketing strategies so that the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah can be better known to the public with quality madrasah in accordance with the vision, mission and objectives of the school. b) For managers and teachers of Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur. It is hoped that the results of this study can spur cooperation between managers and teachers of the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah and outside the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah such as with other madrasah or schools in the Sidoarjo area and surrounding areas in marketing the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah as a good quality madrasah with complete infrastructure and excellent religious programmes and good student achievement. c) For Parents of Students of Madrasah MINU Tambaksumur. It is hoped that the results of this study can be a means for parents and the community to participate in promoting the MINU Tambaksumur Madrasah.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

It is hoped that this research can be a reference for future researchers to conduct research with more in-depth educational service marketing strategy variables with the development of research methods.

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