

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Educational Marketing Management Strategy to Increase the Number of New Students

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This study aims to analyze effective educational marketing management strategies to increase the number of new students at Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi. In an era of increasingly fierce competition, madrasas are required to implement appropriate marketing strategies to attract the interest of prospective new students and parents. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method on a madrasa that successfully increased the number of new students. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the marketing strategies used include: (1) planning excellence as a promotion to attract prospective new students, (2) organizing the formation of a new student admissions committee, (3) implementing strategies determined by the madrasa, such as promoting madrasa activities through social media and outreach to the community, (4) monitoring and evaluation are carried out through internal meetings with the PPDB committee led directly by the madrasa principal by reviewing the results of the marketing strategies that have been implemented in terms of the level of community response, the effectiveness of social media use, and the number of prospective new students who register. The implementation of this marketing strategy has been proven to increase the attractiveness of madrasahs and result in an increase in the number of new students. This research is expected to provide practical recommendations for madrasah administrators in designing adaptive and sustainable marketing strategies.

**Keywords ;** Educational marketing management, Marketing Strategy, New Students.

### Introduction

Education is the most important main pillar in empowering knowledge for society and the nation. In addition to the development of higher quality human resources, it must be able to market and publish its educational services effectively. The community's paradigm towards education is now starting to change, because education is no longer seen only as a form of social concern, but also as an institution that has economic value and requires a more appropriate marketing strategy. (Jamaludin et al., 2024)

Educational institutions currently need to be managed well and professionally. With increasingly tight competition, institutions that are not managed well can easily be abandoned by consumers, the community, and prospective new students. Conversely, if a school institution is managed well, it will become the institution of choice for prospective consumers and prospective new students for reasons of being more profitable and promising with better education. Based on this reference, educational providers must be more creative and explore the uniqueness and benefits of the institution to support the needs desired by customers of educational services. One of the educational services provided is through educational marketing activities such as product introductions and service demonstrations. (Binjai No et al., 2022)

The era of globalization has significantly impacted the increasingly fierce competition between educational institutions, placing a heavy burden on each institution to determine an effective marketing strategy to attract new prospective students. The New Student Admissions (PPDB) is currently a crucial stage in determining the existence and sustainability of an educational institution (Nurhaliza et al., 2022). The success of educational marketing can be seen from the number of new students who register. In addition to being an attraction, educational institutions must also demonstrate public trust in the quality and services provided. In this process, the marketing strategy of educational institutions is crucial to develop and implement optimally.

The current marketing strategy of educational institutions must have a systematic plan for marketing activities as a reference in achieving the educational institution's predetermined goals (Abidin & Hamzah, 2024). The planned marketing strategy is used to attract the interest of prospective new students. In this activity, some educational institutions emphasize services with facilities such as adequate buildings, equipment, and infrastructure. In addition to focusing on service, some institutions determine the strategic focus on teacher quality, while others focus on affordability (Harsoyo & Dian Sukmawati, 2023).

Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi is an educational institution under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This school, which includes implementing religious culture, aims to instill a noble character in its students, in line with the expectations of parents for their children. Religious culture also influences the quality of educational institutions, which play a crucial role in educational marketing, fostering public trust. Effective marketing strategies are guaranteed to attract public trust. Therefore, educational institutions require strategies for educational marketing. Possible steps include market identification, market segmentation, differentiation or placement, educational communication, and service to the community served by the educational institution (Amin & Alinur, 2022).

The development and progress of an educational institution can lead to increasingly fierce competition between institutions. Therefore, marketing requires interrelated strategies to achieve educational marketing targets. First, designing a strategy that includes market segmentation analysis, determining target markets, and positioning the educational institution to the public and potential new students (Anggraini & Saputra, 2025). Second, implementing the strategy involves implementing an educational marketing mix, setting competitive school fees, selecting a strategic location, and effective promotion through various media, both conventional and digital (Sya'adah, 2024). Third, evaluating the strategy periodically to measure effectiveness and make adjustments as needed by the wider community.

The era of digital technology is developing rapidly and has a significant impact on everything. This includes the competition in educational marketing, which is experiencing increasingly fierce and significant transformations. Educational institutions must utilize digital technology in designing marketing strategies. Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi is one institution that utilizes the development of digital technology as a tool in marketing its educational services. The use of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube is one of the more modern educational marketing strategies (Iskandar & Al-Fatih, 2024). This modern strategy can easily reach a wider audience and can facilitate more appropriate two-way communication between educational institutions and prospective students and parents. Furthermore, digital marketing also provides opportunities for educational institutions to showcase and promote the institution's advantages in a more creative and attractive way to prospective new students.

Educational institutions must now have product aspects that can be offered through several programs to potential consumers. Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi has several programs that can be published including academic programs, excellence, extracurricular activities, as well as achievements that have been achieved by the institution and students (Pratiwi et al., 2024). Product differentiation is the main key to highlighting the advantages of educational institutions. In addition, the prices offered are not only related to educational costs, but also include various school policies such as scholarship programs, flexible payment systems and transparency in budget determination. (Rahayu & Muafiah, 2022). Decision-making for parents and prospective new students also looks at the strategic location of the institution, easy access, and supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure are important

factors that influence the selection of schools that will be chosen and desired by prospective new students.

Good and professional educational institution services will add a unique image to prospective new students and the community, including various physical aspects of the institution such as buildings, classrooms, mosques, sports fields, and other supporting facilities (Hartono & Zainuddin, 2024). In addition, the quality of human resources possessed by educators and educational staff, including competence, professionalism, and teacher dedication, is a very valuable asset in educational marketing strategies as a guide for parents' considerations in choosing a school for their children (Budiyatmo & Iriani, 2022).

A poorly managed marketing strategy has a significant impact on an educational institution, including a lack of interest from new students in continuing their education at the institution. This phenomenon of declining interest from new students has also occurred at Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi over the past two years. As a result, the school has a shortage of students in grade 8, with only 10 students and in grade 9 only 5 students. In contrast, there are 23 students in grade 7. This significant difference prompted researchers to conduct research on how educational institutions can restore their positive image to prospective students and the community. One study showed that implementing a well-planned and structured marketing strategy can significantly increase the number of new students . Evayanti et al. (2024) found that an effective marketing strategy can increase the interest of prospective new students.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine and analyze educational marketing strategies for increasing the number of new students. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of educational marketing management science, while also providing practical recommendations for educational institutions in designing and implementing effective marketing strategies to enhance their competitiveness and sustainability.

## Method

### RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to understand and provide an in-depth overview of educational marketing strategies in a natural context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The case study allows researchers to comprehensively explore the marketing strategies implemented by Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi and its surrounding context. The location of this private institution in a rural area certainly faces real challenges in terms of marketing its educational services, making it highly relevant for this research.

The method used in data collection consists of 3 main techniques, namely in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2019). By selecting this approach, researchers can explain and provide a more accurate picture of the educational marketing strategy at Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1 Findings Management Strategy Research Educational Marketing

Aspect	Focus of Findings	Field Practice	Main Impact
<b>Educational Marketing Strategy</b>	Utilization of social media and digital platforms for school promotion	The school actively uses social media to promote flagship programs , student achievements, and school activities to prospective students and parents.	Promotional reach increases significantly, interest among prospective students increases, and direct interaction with parents is easier to establish.

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Focus of Findings</b>	<b>Field Practice</b>	<b>Main Impact</b>
<b>Educational Institution Branding</b>	Image building and strong institutional identity in society	School highlighting academic excellence, discipline, Islamic culture, and facilities in every promotional material	Increased public trust in the institution, alumni loyalty, and attraction of new students from various regions
<b>Improving the Quality of Educational Services</b>	Improving the quality of the teaching and learning process and infrastructure	Schools, updating the curriculum according to national standards, building facilities in a gradual and comfortable study space	Increased parent and student satisfaction, improved student academic grades, and the creation of a positive reputation that encourages word-of-mouth recommendations.
<b>Market Evaluation and Research</b>	Periodic analysis of education market needs and trends	The school conducts parent satisfaction surveys, analyzes student data annually, and studies community needs trends to adjust programs and marketing strategies.	Marketing decision-making becomes more focused and data-based, promotional strategies are more targeted, and school program adaptations are more responsive to community needs.

Source : *Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi*

### **Educational Marketing Management Strategies Applied**

Educational marketing is a strategy that cannot be separated from the management of every educational institution. According to Kotler and Fox, educational marketing is an effort or action taken to design institutional products, set prices, distribute, and promote educational institution services to the community and prospective students effectively and efficiently (Mulyasa, 2021). Based on the results of research conducted at Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi, educational marketing strategies have been implemented systematically and planned to market educational services. The strategies that have been implemented include: (1) Marketing based on religious studies and religious activities to the community in the surrounding area, (2) socialization and visits to elementary schools (SD) as feeder schools, (3) utilization of social media such as TikTok, Instagram, etc. as a means of digital promotion. The combination of conventional and digital approaches is very effective in educational marketing.

Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi also develops a strong madrasah characteristic through the emphasis on Islamic values and superior programs. One of these programs is the habit of morning sorogan which is usually filled with activities of reciting Asmaul Husna, sholawat, tadarrus Al-Qur'an and continued with dhuha prayer which is carried out before learning activities begin. The positive image of the madrasah is an intangible asset that greatly influences parents' decisions in choosing a school for their children. Thus, MTs Ma'arif 11 Tokawi not only competes in physical facility services, but also in the dimensions of religious academic values and excellence offered to the community and prospective new students (Septiana and Mulyadi 2023).

In the planning stage, the madrasah principal and his staff design and formulate new student admission objectives, selecting flagship programs as promotional media to be used in the educational marketing process. Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi has flagship programs, namely discipline, religious culture, and extracurricular activities. The efforts of these flagship programs as the quality of madrasah service in meeting the needs of the community and prospective new students are highly relevant.

The organizing stage involves the formation of a new student admissions committee involving teachers, administrative staff, and committee elements. This division of tasks includes the preparation of promotional strategies and materials, management of social media and applicant data, and information services to parents or public relations. This strategy is consistent with Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi specifically through public relations by relying on compact and structured teamwork to attract the interest of new students (Asy'ari & Indri (2024).

Implementation stage, the strategy is implemented through the publication of new student admission pamphlets (PPDB) and madrasah activities through social media, visiting each elementary school (SD) and socializing madrasah programs to prospective new students, especially religious flagship programs and instilling discipline values. In addition, the madrasah is also present in community activities and of course at every event the Mts students display culture such as the kethek ogleng dance, with this performance the public can know that Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi is also able to compete in non-academic fields.

The monitoring and evaluation phase is conducted through an internal meeting with the PPDB committee, led directly by the madrasah principal. The results of the implemented marketing strategy are reviewed, based on the level of public response, the effectiveness of social media use, and the number of prospective new students who register. The management strategy, which encompasses planning, organizing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating, demonstrates a systematic and sustainable implementation (Pauji et al., 2022).

Continuous evaluation is crucial for improving the quality of educational marketing. Evaluating strategies, processes, and implementation outcomes ensures that madrasahs remain relevant and trusted by the wider community (Agustina & Sapitri, 2022). Broadly speaking, the strategy employed by Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi reflects a relational marketing approach, namely building sustainable relationships between the madrasah and the community through direct interaction in socio-religious activities. This approach is effective in ensuring public trust in religious educational institutions, influenced by their closeness to religious values (Asy'ari & Indri, 2024).

Thus, the marketing strategy not only serves as a promotional medium for the madrasah but also as an instrument of social legitimacy for the madrasah within the community. In the context of the madrasah's image, the marketing strategy implemented by Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi is not merely a slogan, but rather a branding strategy or educational service that relies on real service quality and planned communication (Hermawan et al., 2024).

These findings reinforce Winardi's (2021) theory, which states that successful educational marketing management requires visionary leadership, a solid marketing team, and the support of all madrasah components. The principal of MTs Ma'arif 11 Tokawi plays an active role as a marketing manager, motivating teachers, staff, and the school committee to work together as effective promotional agents. This approach makes marketing not just a one-person task, but a collective responsibility of the entire madrasah community.

### **Management of Facilities and Infrastructure as an Attraction of Madrasahs**

Facilities and infrastructure are a crucial component in providing quality education. Well-equipped facilities not only support successful learning but also attract prospective students and parents when choosing a school. At Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi, facilities and infrastructure are managed in a planned and systematic manner to ensure they are well maintained. Interviews with the principal revealed that the school receives government assistance almost every year. With this assistance, the school continues to improve and maintain its existing facilities to provide optimal service to students and the surrounding community.

The utilization of infrastructure at the madrasah is not only to support the success of the student learning process, but Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi also utilizes it to organize activities involving the community, such as religious activities and sports. These activities not only serve as a forum to strengthen the relationship between the madrasah and the community, but also indirectly promote the existence and quality of the madrasah to the surrounding community. This community marketing approach is a marketing strategy that prioritizes community involvement as an indirect promotional agent (Rahayu, 2021).

Based on the management of the infrastructure of Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi, it can be seen that this management has been positioned as a broader educational marketing strategy and is a strategic step that supports each other in realizing the goal of the madrasah to continue to be in demand by the community amidst increasingly tight competition between educational institutions.

### **Obstacles Faced and Solutions to Overcome Them**

Every plan inevitably faces obstacles during implementation. However, these obstacles do not prevent the madrasah from realizing its predetermined goals. Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi experienced a decline in interest from prospective new students. Consequently, the madrasah experienced a student shortage. This occurred for two years: in 2023, there were only 5 students enrolled, and in 2024, there were 10 students enrolled. However, in 2025, there were 23 students enrolled.

The head of the madrasah conveyed several obstacles that caused a decline in interest from prospective new students, namely limited marketing budgets on a small scale for private institutions, increasingly tight competition with state educational institutions, limited facilities in managing social media, and lack of supervision from the head of the madrasah when implementing marketing strategies.

The principal is responsible for addressing the declining interest of prospective new students and the lack of trust from the surrounding community. The evaluation was conducted with all teachers at the school to identify weaknesses in the marketing strategy that led to the decline in interest. Based on the interviews, the principal identified weaknesses in the marketing strategy in the community area. Recognizing these weaknesses, the school has begun outreach to elementary schools in Tokawi and is now present in the community as a platform for introducing the school. Highlights include student achievements at the district level, outstanding religious and cultural programs, and achievements in sports.

The presence of the madrasah in the community will increase public awareness that Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi also offers excellent programs that are competitive with public schools. Furthermore, public trust will increase, and the madrasah will feel more familiar with the school. The solutions implemented by this madrasah can restore its good image and regain interest among the community and prospective new students.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the results of research and discussion, it can be concluded that the educational marketing management strategy in increasing the number of new students at Mts Ma'arif 11 Tokawi includes five stages: planning the determination of educational marketing objectives, organizing the formation of the new student admission committee (PPDB), implementing the determined strategy starting from the publication of the new student admission pamphlet (PPDB) and promotion of madrasah activities, The monitoring and evaluation stage is carried out through internal meetings with the PPDB committee to review the results of the marketing strategy that has been implemented. The management of infrastructure is not only utilized by madrasah students, but also as activities that involve the community such as religious and sports activities to promote the existence and quality of the madrasah to the surrounding community. This community marketing approach includes a marketing strategy that prioritizes community involvement as an indirect promotional agent. The factor that causes the decline in interest in prospective new students is the lack of strict supervision by the madrasah principal towards the new student admission committee. By realizing this problem, the madrasah principal evaluated with the committee so that a solution was found, namely the madrasah must blend in and be present in the community. This solution aims to promote madrasahs and the

quality of their educational services. This highly relevant educational marketing strategy aims to restore trust in madrasas and thereby attract interest from the community and prospective new students.

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