

## Marketing Strategies for Islamic Boarding School Students to Increase the Acceptance of New Students (Case Study at Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School, Muara Bungo)

Nasrullah<sup>1)</sup> & Mulyana<sup>2)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup>Faculty of Economic, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (UNISSULA) Semarang, Indonesia, E-mail: [nasrullah.std@unissula.ac.id](mailto:nasrullah.std@unissula.ac.id)

<sup>2)</sup>Faculty of Economic, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung (UNISSULA) Semarang, Indonesia, E-mail: [mulyana@unissula.ac.id](mailto:mulyana@unissula.ac.id)

**Abstract.** *The purpose of this study is to determine the marketing strategies used to increase the number of new students at the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School. Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School is one of the Salafiyah/Kitab Kuning Islamic Boarding Schools located in Muara-Bungo Regency, Jambi. This research is a qualitative research-Case Study with SWOT Analysis, used to measure the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that will be faced by the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School. Data were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. The results of the analysis show that the Islamic Boarding School is in a fairly strategic location, the Salafiyah/yellow book Islamic Boarding School that has formal education, but the Islamic boarding school has weaknesses in the aspects of technology and management, opportunities for the Islamic boarding school come from the strong community tradition of sending children to religious educational institutions, while the threat is from competitors, such as Islamic boarding schools around the Islamic boarding school, modern Islamic boarding schools including public schools, another threat is the negative influence of technology, social media and online gambling for today's teenagers which causes their dependence on these things.*

**Keywords:** *Analysis; Improvement; Marketing; Strategy.*

### 1. Introduction

Human civilization has shown progressive change over time, marked by the entry of human life into an era of technological revolution that has fundamentally transformed ways of life in various dimensions and social structures. This change has forced all sectors, including Islamic boarding schools and their students, to adapt to face the challenges of disruption in the industrial revolution. Despite the ongoing developments, Islamic boarding schools remain steadfast due to the consistent application of basic principles in their educational processes.

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are educational institutions based on Islamic values, where students live in dormitories and study under the guidance of a religious teacher

(ustadz) led by a kyai (Islamic teacher). As one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, Islamic boarding schools developed from local culture since the arrival of Islam in the archipelago. The religious education system implemented in Islamic boarding schools adopts traditions that predate the arrival of Islam. The role of Islamic boarding schools in the context of national education is significant, as evidenced by their tangible contributions to the nation's history and the continuity of education in Indonesia.

Rapid technological advancements have not displaced the core values of Islamic boarding schools, but rather have become complementary disciplines that develop in parallel with other disciplines within the school. A concrete example can be seen in the learning materials, where some Islamic boarding schools still maintain a single text as the primary source of learning, such as the study of grammar, grammar, and others. This material remains core and is even supplemented with general knowledge relevant to changing times, such as English and information and communication technology (ICT). The positive adaptation of Islamic boarding schools to these changes can ensure the continued existence of prospective students in society and the sustainability of the Islamic boarding school itself.

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are often categorized as a traditional education system, but this is not entirely accurate, as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) continue to adapt their curricula to current developments. The general education curriculum implemented is not significantly different from that of other educational institutions in general. Islamic boarding schools are expected to introduce students to new knowledge that is in line with modern developments, such as technology, national culture, and the arts. This implementation is expected to strengthen the students' character by instilling religious values combined with knowledge needed in the professional world. Upon completion of their education, students are expected to possess noble morals, independence, and prioritize goodness and noble character in their professional lives.

Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) are the oldest and most distinctive educational system in Indonesia, a source of inspiration for academics and researchers from various disciplines. Studies on pesantren have produced doctors in anthropology, sociology, education, politics, and religion, making them a significant contributor to comprehensive human development (Purnomo, 2017).

A paradigm shift in how Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) are viewed is a current challenge. The educational perspective, which previously emphasized social aspects, is shifting toward viewing education as a business entity. The introduction of marketing concepts into education by those without a thorough understanding of the field is a crucial factor in efforts to improve the quality of education.

Today, society views Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) differently because many modern schools have implemented advanced technological facilities similar to those found in modern schools. Therefore, the existence of Islamic boarding schools remains crucial in Indonesia's social diversity. Islamic boarding schools need to attract prospective students and raise public

awareness of their role. To support the advancement of Islamic boarding schools, implementing targeted marketing strategies is essential to attracting new students. Students play a crucial role in the sustainability of Islamic boarding schools as educational institutions.

Institutional managers, including foundations, are always striving to develop their institutions. Therefore, a new student marketing strategy is necessary to ensure planned programs are implemented as intended. The strategy serves as a guide for action and a collective tool for determining the direction, scope, and steps that will enable the institution to achieve its long-term goals (Djamarah, 2006).

The Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School, located in Sirih Sekapur Village, Jujuhan District, Bungo Regency, Jambi Province, operates a Salafiyah program based on the yellow text. It also offers equivalent education programs, in accordance with the Ministry of Religious Affairs program, namely Wustha (equivalent to junior high school) and Ulya (equivalent to high school).

## 2. Research Methods

Methodology is generally defined as a body of methods and rules followed in a science or discipline. While the method itself is a regular systematic plan for or way of doing something. The word method comes from the Greek term *methodos* (meta + bodos) which means way, (Websters, 1994) "Thus, qualitative research methods are systematic approaches used by researchers to collect data to identify and explain the social phenomena being observed. In social sciences, there are two types of dichotomous research methodologies, namely qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative methods develop with the principle that research is an ongoing process and is never completely finished (unfinished process).

## 3. Results and discussion

Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School is under the Menara Islam Foundation, located at Jl. Lintas Sumatera Jambi–Padang, Sirih-Sekapur Village, Jujuhan District, Bungo Regency, Jambi Province. This Islamic boarding school was founded on October 10, 2013 by Abi H. Muhammad Asradi, SE, together with Hj. Rosmaleni, and inaugurated on October 18, 2014 by the then Governor of Jambi, Drs. H. Hasan Basri Agus, accompanied by the Regent of Bungo H. Sudirman Zaini, SH, MH, and the Deputy Regent H. Mashuri, SP, ME

The Islamic boarding school was built on approximately 5 hectares of land donated by the late H. Syarkoni and Hj. Romna, located in Sirih-Sekapur Village, Jujuhan District. Its strategic location is on the Jambi-Padang Trans-Sumatra Highway, directly bordering West Sumatra.

Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School is under the care of H. Nasrullah, S.Kom.I. The existence of this Islamic Boarding School is expected to become one of the Islamic educational institutions that can develop well in guiding and educating the sons and daughters of the surrounding area in particular and in general for all sons and daughters of the Muslim community who want their children to gain religious knowledge.

The Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School is under the care of H. Nasrullah, S.Kom.I. This Islamic boarding school is expected to become a developing Islamic educational institution, capable of guiding and educating the sons and daughters of the surrounding area, as well as providing opportunities for all Muslims who want their children to gain religious knowledge.

NO	ROOM NAME	CONDITION		
		GOOD	CURRENTLY	DAMAGED
1	Classroom	10		
2	Mosque / Prayer Room	1		
3	Leadership Room	1		
4	Laboratory	1		
6	toilet	2		
7	Hall	1		
8	Dining room	2		
9	Hostel	10		
10	Cooperative & Canteen	3		
11	Teacher's Office/Room	1		
12	Transportation Vehicles	2		

Table Educational Personnel and Teaching Staff Educational Personnel

No	Name	Position	Education
1	H. MUHAMMAD ASRADI, SE	MUDIR	S1
2	Hj. ADE ULFA, S.Pd	TREASURER	S1
3	H. NASRULLAH, S. Kom.I.	HEAD OF PKPPS	S1
4	IWAN SAPUTRA, SH	Head of the Tu Division	S1
5	HIDAYAH WULANDRI, S.Pd	Deputy Head of Curriculum	S1
6	Mr. Abdul Hadi	BOARDING STUDENT	PON-PES
7	SYAHRIA IKA SAFITRI	OPERATOR	High School

The curriculum implemented at the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School uses the Salafiyah/Traditional system with a focus on the study of yellow books, following the curriculum of the Musthafawiyah Purba Baru Islamic Boarding School as a reference Islamic boarding school. In addition, general subjects are also taught so that students who complete their education at this Islamic boarding school obtain formal diplomas, namely the WUSTHA Diploma, equivalent to junior high school, and the ULYA Diploma, equivalent to high school. Thus, graduates of PPS Hidayatul Musthafawiyah have the opportunity to continue their education to the tertiary level.

Every educational institution has specific goals, known as institutional objectives. The Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School has several main goals, including:

- 1) Forming people who are devoted to God Almighty
- 2) Developing the character of the nation, especially the younger generation who have a high spirit of patriotism and nationalism based on noble morals
- 3) Developing a young generation that is independent and able to understand religion comprehensively

Extracurricular activities are activities held outside of mandatory class hours. These programs aim to help students better understand and internalize the material learned in class and to enable them to apply it, both during their time at the Islamic boarding school and upon returning to the community. This allows them to more easily adapt and interact with their surroundings. Some of the extracurricular activities offered include:

- 1) Learn Computer
  - 2) Hadroh Sholawat
  - 3) It is obligatory to memorize the wirid after prayer
  - 4) Speech Practice
  - 5) Sport
  - 6) Weekly Study Group
  - 7) Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW / Barzanji
  - 8) Farming & animal husbandry
- In today's competitive era of modern education, Islamic boarding schools are required to excel not only in religious aspects but also in management, including marketing. As one of the Islamic educational institutions in the Bungo area, Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Muara Bungo Islamic Boarding School faces the challenge of maintaining its existence and increasing the number of new students each year.

#### a. Lack of a Structured Marketing Strategy

Most traditional Islamic boarding schools still rely on word-of-mouth promotion or alumni networks. This limits information reach to a specific community. The lack of a professionally designed marketing strategy (such as market segmentation, positioning, and promotional media selection) presents a barrier to reaching prospective students from outside the region or those unfamiliar with the boarding school.

#### b. Limitations of Digital Media Utilization

In the digital era, social media and websites have become strategic tools for branding educational institutions. However, the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School in

Muara Bungo has not yet optimally utilized digital media as a marketing tool. This has resulted in low visibility among the wider public, particularly among young people and parents who seek information online.

c. Lack of Specialized Human Resources in the Marketing Sector

Islamic boarding school management is generally focused on developing religious curricula and internal governance, leaving marketing aspects unprioritized. The absence of a dedicated marketing and promotion team results in disorganized and incidental promotional efforts. Effective marketing, however, requires ongoing planning, implementation, and evaluation.

d. A Strong Brand Image Has Not Been Established

Islamic boarding schools are often stereotyped as closed, traditional, and out-of-touch institutions. To attract new urban or millennial students, they need to build a strong, positive image—that they excel in general education, technology, entrepreneurship, and character development.

b. Lack of Strategic Partnerships with the Outside World

In the context of modern marketing management, partnerships with external stakeholders such as zakat institutions, the government, local media, and religious organizations are crucial for expanding networks and enhancing reputation. Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School has not yet optimally developed and managed strategic partnerships to support the institution's sustainability and growth.

c. Solution Direction Overview

The goal of this marketing strategy is to increase the number of enrollees (new students), build a positive image, and strengthen the competitiveness of Islamic boarding schools by developing promotional and marketing communication strategies using a modern approach that maintains Islamic and traditional values. The following strategies can be implemented by Islamic boarding schools:

1) Recognizing market segmentation:

a. Geographical: Local communities, surrounding districts, and areas that have easy access to the location of the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Bungo Islamic boarding school.

b. Demographics: High level of public interest in enrolling children in Islamic boarding schools.

c. Psychographics: Parents who are religious, care about character education, and have a tradition of sending their children to Islamic boarding schools.

d. Behavior: Those seeking boarding education, academic and religious integration, and a safe and supportive environment for moral development.



2) Positioning. "Integrated Islamic Boarding School, Tradition of Science and Technology" Highlighting the excellence of the combination of formal education (WUSTHA and ULYA), teaching of the Yellow Book, and character building through Tamrinnan activities, which are packaged in a modern and adaptive manner to technology.

### 3) Building a Positive Image

The Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Bungo Islamic Boarding School is an Islamic educational institution founded on the spirit of sincerity, independence, and devotion to knowledge and religion. Based on Islamic values, this boarding school serves as a center for character development in students who are knowledgeable, have noble morals, and are ready to face the changing times. The boarding school's positive image is reflected in the following aspects:

a. From a scholarly perspective, Islamic boarding schools integrate the Salafiyah curriculum (the study of Islamic texts) with formal education, thus producing a generation solidly grounded in religious fundamentals while also adapting to modern developments. Students receive intensive training in interpretation, hadith, jurisprudence, Arabic, and general knowledge, developing them into individuals with a balance between dhikr (remembrance) and thought.

b. In terms of morals and character, the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Bungo Islamic Boarding School instills noble values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, and social awareness. Students are nurtured to become humble, independent, and possess leadership qualities. Through an exemplary educational approach, the ustadz and caregivers serve as role models in their daily lives.

c. The image of Islamic boarding schools is also strengthened by their social and religious outreach activities within the community. Islamic boarding schools serve not only as places of learning but also as centers of religious and social activities. Activities such as regular religious study groups, community service, and community service demonstrate that Islamic boarding schools actively contribute to building a religious and harmonious society.

d. The support of alumni spread across various regions, including educators, preachers, entrepreneurs, and civil servants, is a tangible testament to the success of Islamic boarding school education. Their work serves as ambassadors for the noble values instilled in them at the school, while strengthening the school's reputation in the public eye. With a spirit of renewal rooted in tradition, and openness to technological and media developments, the Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Bungo Islamic Boarding School continues to strive to build a positive brand as a high-quality, progressive, and globally-minded Islamic boarding school.

The positive image it enjoys today is the result of the hard work of its founders, caretakers, teachers, students, and community members, who have collectively made this Islamic boarding school a place to gain knowledge, strengthen faith, and develop well-rounded individuals. By upholding its noble Islamic values, Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Bungo will continue to be a light for the community and the nation.

e. Affirmation of Islamic Boarding School Identity

1) Clear Vision and Mission: Strengthen the vision and mission of the Islamic boarding school to become the basis for the direction of development and branding.

2) Pesantren Values: Highlight unique values such as sincerity, discipline, brotherhood, and knowledge that are instilled in students.

3) Figures and History: The story of the founding of Islamic boarding schools and the role of their founders in Islamic preaching and education.

4) Improving the Quality of Education.

a) Integrated Curriculum: Combines the Salafiyah curriculum (yellow books) and the formal curriculum (Ministry of Education/Ministry of Religion).

b) Strengthening Human Resources: Improve the quality of teachers through training, further studies, or collaboration between Islamic boarding schools.

c) Student Achievements: Encourage students to participate in MTQ (Qualifying Quran Recitation), MQK (Qualifying Quran Recitation), Arabic debates, scientific papers, etc., and then publish the results. The Hidayatul Musthafawiyah Islamic Boarding School in Bungo has won many competitions/MTQs at both the sub-district and regency levels. This theory emphasizes the importance of an organization's perception in the eyes of stakeholders and the public. Image repair strategies focus on responding quickly and appropriately to attacks or complaints during a crisis. Benoit emphasizes two key components: first, the organization must demonstrate responsibility through concrete actions; second, these actions must be mindful of the impact and capable of eliciting a positive reaction.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the SWOT analysis of the internal and external conditions above, it can be concluded that: Islamic boarding schools possess key strengths, including strategic locations, comprehensive formal education (WUSTHA and ULYA), adequate infrastructure, and flagship programs such as the Yellow Book (Kitab Kuning) and Tamrinan activities. These strengths serve as significant assets in attracting prospective students and establishing a superior image. The main weaknesses of Islamic boarding schools lie in the technology and internal management aspects, particularly the lack of human resources (HR) in the field of information technology, the absence of a management information system, and the suboptimal management of students' time. Great opportunities arise from the strong tradition of sending children to Islamic boarding schools and technological developments that can be utilized for promotion and innovation in learning. The biggest threat to Islamic boarding schools comes from competition with public schools and other modern Islamic boarding schools, as well as the negative influence of technological advances such as online gambling and social media if not balanced with character education and good supervision.



## 5. References

- Abdullah, Ma'ruf, (2016). *Manajemen Bisnis Syariah*. Yogyakarta. Aswaja Pressindo.
- Adhitya, Fajar. (2018). *The Marketing Strategy of the Product with Sensual Marketing*. International Journal of Islamic Business and Economics. ISSN: 2599-3216 EISSN: 2615-420X.
- Akmalia & dkk, (2022). *Strategi Humas Dalam Upaya Peningkatan Citra Sekolah*. Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar. Jurnal manajemen Pendidikan Islam.
- Alma, Buchari. (2003). *Pemasaran strategik dan jasa Pendidikan*. Bandung: Alfa Beta.
- Amirullah, (2015). *Manajemen Strategi Teori-Konsep-Kinerja*. Jakarta: Mitra Wacana Media.
- Ariwibowo, Eko, Muhamad. (2019). *Strategi Pemasaran Lembaga Pendidikan Tinggi Swasta*, Scientific Journal of Reflection : Economic, accounting, Management and Business. No.2. Vol. 2.
- Bogdan, C, Robert & Biklen, Knopp, Sari. (1998). *Qualitative Reserch for Education Boston*: Allyn and Bacon, Inc, ha. Cabyova, Ludmila. & Krajcovic,
- Djamarah, Bahri, Syaiful (2006). *Strategi Belajar Mengajar dan Mengajar*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Faizin, Imam. (2017). *Strategi Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan dalam Meningkatkan Nilai Jual Madrasah*". Jurnal Madaniyah, Vol. 7 No.
- Fathonah, Kuni. (2016). "*Strategi Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan dalam Meningkatkan Pelayanan Pendidikan di MAN 1 Sragen*", Tesis, Program Pascasarjana Institut Agama Islam Negeri Surakarta.
- Furchan, Arief. (2004). *Transformasi Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Gama Media.
- Halim, Abdul. (2020). *Manajemen Pemasaran Pendidikan Islam*. Jurnal Al-Ibrah/vol. 5; No. 1
- Hariadi, Bambang. (2005). *Strategi Manajemen*. Malang. Bayumedia Publishing.
- Hidayat, Ara dan Machali, Imam. (2012). *Pengelolaan Pendidikan: Konsep, Prinsip, dan Aplikasi dalam Mengelola Sekolah dan Madrasah*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kaukaba.
- Hurriyanti, Ratih, (2019). *Bauran Pemasaran & Loyalitas Konsumen*. Bandung Alfabeta.
- Irman, Afandi. (2021). *Manajemen Humas Dalam Membangun Citra Sekolah*.
- Kotler dan Keller, (2009). *Manajemen Pemasaran*, Jilid 1, Edisi ke 13, Erlangga, Jakarta.
- Lupiyadi dan Hamdani, (2006). *Manajemen Pemasaran Jasa*. Salemba Empat. Jakarta
- Machali, Imam. (2010). *Manajemen Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan Madrasah dalam Antologi Kependidikan Islam*. Yogyakarta: Teras.
- Moleong, Lexy, J. (2001). *Metode penelitian Kulitatif*. Bandung: Rosdakarya.
- Muhaimin, Suti'ah & Prabowo. (2010). *Manajemen Pendidikan: Aplikasinya dalam Penyusunan Rencana Pengembangan Sekolah/Madrasah*. Jakarta. Kencana Prenada Media.

- Mukaromah, Uliyatul. (2022). *Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan dalam meningkatkan brand image di MI Al Kautsar Durisawo Ponorogo*, Journal Excelencia of Islamic Education & Managemen, Vol 2, No 2.
- Munir, M. (2016). *Manajemen pemasaran pendidikan dalam meningkatkan kuantitas peserta didik*, Jurnal manajemen pendidikan Islam: STAI Darussalam Krempyang, Nganjuk, Vol. 1. No. 2.
- Nyoman, Gusti. 2017. *Analisis Swot Strategi Meningkatkan Keunggulan Pada UD. Kacang Sari di Desa Tamblang*. Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi Undiksha Volume 9 No.2
- Orr, B. (2013). *Conducting a S.W.O.T. analysis for program Improvement*. US-China Education Review A, 3(6).
- Pearce Robinson, *Manajemen Strategik Formulasi, Implementasi dan Pengendalian*.