



Marketing Management Strategies in Increasing New Student Enrollment

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ABSTRACT

The current development of technology and the internet at SD Negeri 01 has a significant impact on the marketing sector. People are now increasingly familiar with various social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Line, and Telegram. In addition to functioning as a communication tool, social media has also become one of the most effective means of promotion. This study aims to analyze the role of social media in promoting programs in elementary schools. The method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach, where data sources are obtained through interviews, observations and interviews. Data analysis techniques using data reduction, and conclusion drawing. The results of the field research revealed that social media plays a very crucial role in supporting the success of program marketing at the primary school level. Social media acts as a bridge between the school and the community, allowing information to be shared quickly and efficiently. In addition, primary schools also utilize social media platforms to convey information about various activities, such as available facilities, competitions and other activities. The use of social media in promoting schools has reached an optimal level and contributed significantly to the increase in new learner enrollment. However, schools still need to innovate and be creative in developing their promotional strategies through social media.

Keywords

Management
Marketing
New Learner Enrollment

INTRODUCTION

Progress in education is a critical factor in a nation's success. Therefore, the education system implemented in schools must be socialized to the broader community to ensure access to quality services that meet their needs. Contemporary societal paradigms regarding the role of education are shifting. Whereas education was once viewed solely through a social lens, it is now increasingly perceived through an organizational framework, where educational institutions function as service providers and communities act as consumers (Abadi & Hidayatulloh, 2022).

Marketing strategies for new student admissions (Penerimaan Peserta Didik Baru, PPDB) are essential for the success of educational programs. Marketing encompasses a comprehensive system of activities, including planning, pricing, promotion, and distribution, all aimed at fulfilling consumer needs (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Consequently, marketing plays a pivotal role in educational institutions and requires well-structured strategies to ensure effectiveness. A strategy refers to a systematic plan involving the evaluation and selection of alternatives to achieve organizational goals (Mintzberg et al., 2020). Program success depends on aligning marketing activities with strategic objectives.

Schools have long employed marketing strategies to promote their programs and visibility within communities, using both direct and indirect approaches. Direct marketing includes outreach initiatives in kindergartens (Taman Kanak-Kanak, TK) and early childhood education programs (Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, PAUD), as well as organizing competitions for elementary schools and local communities. Indirect marketing involves distributing brochures, banners, and leveraging digital platforms such as websites and social media (Karim & Zafi, 2022). The rapid advancement of technology and the internet has significantly transformed marketing practices. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Line, and Telegram have become ubiquitous, serving not only as communication tools but also as highly effective promotional channels (Hasana & Siswanto, 2023). As service providers, schools must continuously innovate to enhance stakeholder satisfaction, particularly among students.

Education is a strategic instrument for human development, fostering intelligence, positive attitudes, and essential life skills. It contributes to national progress by cultivating high-quality human resources capable of driving innovation, motivation, and societal change (Rokhani & Purnami, 2021). To achieve these objectives, educational institutions must prioritize continuous improvement and the production of competent graduates (Soenarto et al., 2017).

Globalization has intensified competition across all sectors, including education (Nurlaili, 2018). In recent years, many institutions have faced declining enrollment due to heightened competition for public interest (Karim & Zafi, 2022). Consequently, marketing management has become a critical focus for educational institutions (Wibowo et al., 2022). While marketing is often associated with profit-driven enterprises, its application

in non-profit educational settings remains vital for institutional sustainability (Abadi & Hidayatulloh, 2022).

Numerous studies have examined marketing management in education. Mustaghfirin (2021) explored marketing strategies for student admissions at SMP Al-Huda Semarang, while Supar (2014) analyzed promotional approaches at Integrated Islamic Elementary School Nurul Fikri Tulungagung. Additional studies include Nurhaliza et al. (2022) on enrollment strategies at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Ubudiyah, Syerina Evayanti et al. (2024) on enhancing student interest at Public Elementary School 17 Palu, and Adinegara (2022) on PPDB strategies in vocational high schools. Further research by Winiharti et al. (2023), Ramadhan et al. (2024), and Rahmawati et al. (2024) has contributed to understanding marketing dynamics in diverse educational contexts.

This study distinguishes itself by focusing on SDN 1 Suak Tapeh as a unique case, examining the intersection of student admissions and marketing management strategies. Specifically, it investigates policies for improving promotional efforts and admission quotas. The research aims to:

1. Analyze strategies for enhancing marketing management in new student admissions.
2. Identify supporting and inhibiting factors in policy implementation..

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing interviews to examine the marketing management process of the New Student Admission (PPDB) at SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh, Lubuk Lancang Village, during the 2025/2026 academic year. Following a qualitative methodology, this research aligns with Leedy and Ormrod's (2017) assertion that qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena within their natural context without manipulating the observed subjects. This approach emphasizes investigating objects in their authentic settings, with the researcher serving as the primary instrument (Leedy & Ormrod, 2017). Qualitative research generates descriptive data, including written or spoken words from participants and observable behaviors (Kirk & Miller, 2021). As Kirk and Miller (2021) note, qualitative research is rooted in social science traditions, relying on the observation of human interactions within their social environments, utilizing language and contextual terms.

The interview data focused on marketing strategies, implementation, evaluation, and challenges faced by SDN 1 Suak Tapeh. The researcher observed teachers' promotional efforts, as monitored by the school principal. Additionally, document analysis was employed to gather physical evidence provided by informants during interviews, enhancing data validity and comprehensiveness (Basrowi, 2008). According to Basrowi (2008), document analysis is a crucial data collection technique that yields pertinent records related to the research problem, thereby reducing reliance on assumptions.

Observation constituted another vital component of this study, enabling the researcher to examine daily school activities conducted by the principal. In the context of school marketing, observation is defined as a systematic method for analyzing and recording individual behavior through direct engagement (Supar, 2014). The researcher conducted participatory observation, actively engaging in school activities for over a week. Given that the researcher also served as a teacher at the institution, the collected data were further validated for objectivity.

For data analysis, the researcher employed techniques based on Miles and Huberman's (1994) model, which involves data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Following the acquisition of research permits, the analytical process included transcribing and organizing collected materials to facilitate systematic interpretation. This structured approach ensured a rigorous and methodical examination of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

A. Marketing Management Strategies in Increasing New Student Admissions

Effective marketing management is essential for increasing new student enrollment at SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh. Planning is the initial stage in this process, involving the identification of necessary tasks and the formulation of strategies to achieve institutional goals. According to Ibrahim, Anitah, and Niswah (2022), educational marketing should not be viewed as an attempt to commercialize education or compromise humanistic values. Rather, it represents the school's responsibility to provide access and clear information about its educational services to the community. Planning plays a vital role in reducing decision-making errors (protective benefits) and enhancing the likelihood of achieving institutional

goals (positive benefits). As emphasized by Arifin (2017), such planning is necessary to maintain the integrity of educational values while achieving promotional success.

The implementation phase involves translating decisions into concrete actions aligned with institutional objectives. Mulyadi (2005) states that implementation includes efforts to realize change based on prior planning. At SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh, the marketing mix strategy has been adopted, incorporating product, price, place, and promotion elements. According to Kotler (2004), the marketing mix comprises tactical marketing tools that institutions manage to generate desired responses in the target market. Shinta (2011) similarly asserts that these tools are essential in meeting consumer needs. The product in the educational context includes the school's excellent academic and extracurricular programs, such as religious instruction, scouting, hadroh, sports, and spiritual development activities like Dhuha prayers and Surah Yasin recitations. Mokhtar et al. (2019) highlight that a product must fulfill student needs to retain their interest; otherwise, marketing efforts may prove futile.

In terms of pricing, SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh imposes minimal costs limited to uniforms and extracurricular activities. There are no tuition, registration, or building fees, making it an attractive option for lower-income families. As noted by Dayat (2019) and supported by Sarifudin and Maya (2019), appropriate pricing enhances perceived value and accessibility. Junaris and Haryanti (2022) also emphasize that parents are often willing to pay higher fees for quality services, provided they remain within financial reach. Location also plays a critical role; SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh is easily accessible and served by public transport, making it a convenient choice for families. Ibrahim, Anita, and Niswah (2022) stress the importance of strategic, accessible locations in attracting students.

Promotion is another key component, involving brochures, social media outreach (e.g., WhatsApp, Facebook), and word-of-mouth marketing by educators, students, and parents. These efforts align with the recommendations of Sarifudin and Maya (2019), who argue that active promotion increases public interest in educational institutions. As further supported by Ibrahim, Anita, and Niswah (2022), promotional strategies involving various media channels and the school community contribute significantly to enrollment increases.

Evaluation is the final component of the marketing process. It involves assessing the effectiveness of implemented strategies in meeting enrollment targets, improving institutional reputation, and ensuring student satisfaction. According to Mustaqim (2018),

evaluation should not only focus on enrollment numbers but also on enhancing the overall educational experience. SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh conducts annual evaluations, including feedback sessions with parents, to improve service quality and maintain loyalty. The school's student admission process includes announcements, registration, selection via written tests and interviews, result announcements, and re-registration, following a systematic and transparent process.

Despite various strategies, challenges remain—particularly in maximizing digital promotion. Although the school has a website and utilizes social media, these platforms are underutilized. To address this, involving alumni and parents in digital outreach is recommended, as supported by Sarifudin and Maya (2019), who highlight the influential role alumni can play in expanding institutional reach. Through well-coordinated promotional strategies and community involvement, SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh can enhance its visibility and attract more prospective students.

Discussion

This research aims to increase the number of new students at SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh by emphasizing the importance of planning and implementing effective marketing strategies. Marketing planning serves not only as a strategic guide but also as a tool to minimize errors in decision-making and enhance the success of educational institutions. The findings of this study indicate that the school has adopted a marketing mix strategy to promote its programs. According to Kotler (2004), the marketing mix is defined as "the set of tactical marketing tools that the firm blends to produce the response it wants in the target market" (p. 15). In essence, these tools enable institutions to influence and shape the behavior of their target audience. Shinta (2011) also emphasizes that the marketing mix comprises a set of tactical tools controlled by the institution to produce the desired responses from prospective consumers.

At SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh, promotional activities are implemented through various channels, including the distribution of brochures to surrounding elementary schools, particularly in Lubuk Lancang Village and Suak Tapeh District, as well as the use of popular social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. Additionally, word-of-mouth promotion is actively utilized by school staff, students, and parents. These efforts align with the views of Ibrahim, Anita, and Niswah (2022), who assert that

promotional strategies can involve the dissemination of brochures, the installation of banners, direct outreach to feeder educational institutions, and online promotion through the school website. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of involving all school stakeholders, including students, in the promotion process.

Evaluation of marketing management at SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh is conducted annually, primarily through year-end assessments and meetings with parents. These evaluations aim to assess the quality of services offered by the school and ensure the satisfaction and loyalty of current students and their guardians. Such evaluations are critical for sustaining customer satisfaction and attracting new prospective students. As educational marketing fundamentally seeks to deliver service satisfaction to consumers—namely students and their parents—it is essential that schools continuously review and improve their marketing practices (Mustaqim, 2018).

However, the study also identified several challenges in the implementation of marketing strategies. Despite the widespread use of digital platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, and the availability of an official school website, the school's digital marketing and New Student Registration (PPDB) efforts remain suboptimal. A key issue is the limited effectiveness of social media-based promotional activities. To address this challenge, the school could involve alumni and parents in promoting PPDB information through their social media networks. This strategy would help extend the reach of promotional content and attract a broader audience of potential students and parents. Sarifudin and Maya (2019) support this approach, highlighting that alumni can serve as valuable ambassadors who actively contribute to raising the institution's visibility within the wider community.

CONCLUSION

In the marketing planning stage, SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh establishes a committee responsible for managing the dissemination of information regarding New Student Admission and conducting market segmentation targeting the appropriate audience. The implementation of marketing strategies at SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh adopts the marketing mix approach, which emphasizes several key elements: product, referring to the quality of educational services offered; price, which is set to remain affordable for the target community; place, meaning a strategic and easily accessible school location that provides

a safe and comfortable environment; and promotion, which involves the distribution of brochures, the use of social media platforms, and direct communication with stakeholders. The new student admission process includes several stages, such as internal coordination meetings between educators and school staff, analysis of prospective student needs, and a structured selection process. The formation of the PPDB committee involves all school stakeholders, ensuring collective participation and shared responsibility. Despite these efforts, the school faces obstacles in maximizing the use of digital platforms—such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and its official website—which are crucial tools in reaching prospective students and their families. The underutilization of these platforms limits the effectiveness of digital marketing efforts, even though active engagement through such channels is essential in contemporary educational promotion. Literature on educational marketing management emphasizes that effective PPDB strategies should encompass strategic planning, integrated promotional execution, and periodic evaluations. At SD Negeri 01 Suak Tapeh, the application of these strategies—particularly in areas of branding, digital outreach, and partnerships with local stakeholders—has contributed to an increase in the number of applicants and enhanced the school's competitive positioning in an increasingly dynamic educational environment.

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