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## Implementation of Marketing Strategy with Product and Process Approach at MTsN 3 West Aceh

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how the marketing strategy of educational services used by MTsN 3 West Aceh, especially in the aspects of products and processes, and what are the school's efforts in overcoming the obstacles faced in the implementation process. The research method uses a qualitative approach, with the research subjects being the head of the madrasah, the student waka, three parents of students, and six selected students. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. The data analysis technique used Miles and Huberman's model data analysis, including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawn. The study results show that MTsN 3 West Aceh has succeeded in increasing the interest of prospective students through product innovation (regular programs, digital classes, extracurricular activities, technology utilization) and processes (SOP-based services, human resource development, digitalization, and stakeholder collaboration). Despite facing obstacles such as limited land, funds, and technical problems, madrasas overcame them with adaptive steps. The implications of this study show that the integration of product-based and process-based marketing strategies can be an effective model for the marketing development of other educational institutions in the digital era.

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### Introduction

Marketing is important in educational institutions because marketing is the main activity that distributes the products or services produced to consumers. In the context of educational institutions, the products offered are not only teaching services but also include the reputation of the school, the quality of teaching staff, supporting facilities, and the self-development programs offered. Along with the increasing number of schools and madrasas, the competition between educational institutions is becoming increasingly intense. Therefore, to maintain their existence, schools or madrasas must create and determine the right strategy for marketing their educational products and services (Kurniawan, 2021). One strategy that can be applied is to conduct a compelling marketing mix and be oriented to customer needs.

The marketing mix, which includes product, price, place, promotion, people, *physical* evidence and process, is an important tool that can be used to develop an educational institution's marketing strategy. According to Lovelock et al. (2010), The marketing mix helps marketers create viable strategies to meet customer needs while generating profits in a competitive market. In the context of education, the fulfilment of the needs and desires of customers, namely prospective students and parents, will positively impact their interest in choosing the school or madrasah.

Interest is an impulse in a person that causes interest or attention effectively to encourage the selection of an object or activity that brings satisfaction (Sardiman, 2012). In the context of educational institutions, the interest of prospective students is not only influenced by the school's image but also by how well the school markets the advantages and uniqueness of its products. Therefore, every school or madrasah needs to optimize the right marketing mix, for example, by conducting digital campaigns highlighting the program's advantages, alumni testimonials, superior programs, and communication services that are responsive to prospective students' questions. With a planned and integrated marketing strategy, educational institutions can build a positive image, increase attractiveness, and ultimately boost the interest of prospective students to choose the institution as their place to study.

In the discussion of this article, the marketing strategy that will be studied in depth will focus on two main elements in the marketing mix, namely product and process. Focusing on these two aspects was chosen because they both have a significant impact on increasing the interest of prospective students. The product aspect includes the quality of educational services, ranging from innovative curriculum interactive learning methods to adequate supporting facilities. Meanwhile, the process aspect relates to how the educational services are delivered, including an easily accessible registration system, responsive communication procedures, and friendly and professional services. Excellence in product and process aspects not only increases the positive image of educational institutions in the eyes of the public but also creates a satisfying experience for prospective students and parents to encourage their interest in choosing the school or madrasah. This focus selection is also based on the idea that good product quality and processes will result in continuous customer satisfaction and loyalty while providing a competitive advantage amid increasingly fierce competition.

MTsN 3 West Aceh is one of the madrasahs in West Aceh Regency. Its madrasah is located in an urban area and is considered strategically geographically. The school facilities and infrastructure are also quite good. However, even an educational institution that offers many facilities will not be able to attract applicants' interest if a reliable service marketing strategy does not accompany it. Based on the author's initial observations, MTsN 3 West Aceh has implemented a good marketing mix strategy to increase the interest of prospective students. This can be reviewed from the increase in interest of prospective new students in MTsN 3 West Aceh every year.

Implementing the marketing strategy of educational services is directly proportional to the increase in interest of new students who register at MTsN 3 West Aceh. The increase in number of students enrolled in MTsN 3 West Aceh continues to increase from year to year, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 1.1 Increase in student enrollment over the last 5 years

No	Academic Year	Number of New Students
1.	2019/2020	305
2.	2020/2021	310
3.	2021/2022	319
4.	2022/2023	323
5.	2023/2024	481

*Source: MTsN 3 West Aceh Documentation*

The table above shows that the interest of students who register at MTsN 3 West Aceh has increased in the last five years. This indicates that implementing the marketing strategy of educational services carried out by MTsN 3 West Aceh has influenced the interest of new students, has maintained its existence and can be emulated by other madrasahs and schools.

Several studies have stated that implementing good marketing management will increase students' interest in choosing a particular school/madrasah. Rahmawati et al. (2024) explained in the results of their research that the education marketing strategy at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 5 Subang is implemented in a structured manner, including promotion on social media, publication of madrasah excellence and empowerment of alums as ambassadors. Key success factors include providing excellent programs (such as tahfidz Al-Qur'an, academic achievements, and extracurriculars), improved facilities, and support from stakeholders (parents, community, and religious institutions) to strengthen the positive image of the madrasah. The role of madrasah management is important in designing marketing strategies that are adaptive to technological developments and community needs. The same thing was also conveyed by Putri Prihatin and Faza Ahmad (2020), who stated that the right marketing strategy for educational services could increase the interest of prospective new students in registering at MTsN 5 Sleman Yogyakarta. The excellence of educational programs, effective promotion, and cooperation with various parties such as alumni, parents, and the surrounding community supports the success of this strategy.

Furthermore, Iskandar & Fatih (2024), through their research at MTs Negeri 4 Jombang, showed that madrasas implement an education marketing strategy with targeting tailored to the needs and desires of prospective students. Their interest in attending school will increase if the offers provided by the madrasah follow their preferences. In this case, madrasas utilize various promotional media. In addition, communication between internal and external parties of the madrasah, as well as the exchange of information through the alum network, also plays a role in strengthening an effective marketing strategy. Kurniawan et al. (2024) also explained that SMP IT Darul Muta'allimin Meulaboh increased the number of registrants thanks to implementing a planned and innovative promotion strategy. The same thing was also conveyed by Sih et al. (2024) that SMP Islam Muqorrobin Singosari Malang also implements the same marketing strategy to increase the interest of prospective students, namely through the use of social media as the main means of promotion. In addition, the school also develops superior programs that suit the needs of students. The school also received support from parents, alums, and community leaders who helped strengthen the positive image of the school.

In contrast to previous research, the unique or novelty raised in this article is a more specific deepening of marketing strategies focusing on the integration of product and process aspects in the educational marketing mix, as well as how these two aspects can simultaneously increase the interest of prospective students more effectively in the digital era and the changing needs of contemporary society. Most previous studies have highlighted the implementation of marketing strategies that involve various elements, such as promotion through social media, alum empowerment, and stakeholder support in general. However, there is still room to study more comprehensively how improving the quality of educational products (innovative curriculum, excellent programs, facilities) combined with optimizing service processes (registration services, communication, and user experience) can create significant added value in attracting the interest of prospective students.

Based on the background description stated above, the author is interested in finding out more about the marketing strategy of educational services used by MTsN 3 West Aceh, especially in the aspects of products and processes and what the school's efforts in overcoming the obstacles faced in the implementation process so that prospective students are interested in registering themselves at MTsN 3 West Aceh.

## **Method**

This research was conducted using a qualitative research approach, namely a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people or observed behaviors (Rahmadi, 2011). This research aims to provide an overview of social facts about conditions, situations and phenomena that occur systematically and are related to implementing the marketing mix, especially in the processes and products in MTsN 3 West Aceh, to attract new students.

The subjects were determined using a purposive sampling technique based on objectives. The subjects in this study were the head of the madrasah, the student waka, three parents of students and six students representing each level as many as two people. Data collection in this study was carried out in the following steps:

1. Interview. In this case, the author will conduct direct interviews with the selected sample in this study: the head, student waka, three parents of students and six students of MTsN 3 West Aceh.
2. Observation. The things observed in this study are the marketing strategy activities of educational services in the products and processes carried out by MTsN 3 West Aceh.
3. Documentation. The documentation data collected in this study is an overview of MTsN 3 West Aceh.

In qualitative research, the data analysis process is more focused during the process in the field along with data collection than after. The analysis stage was carried out by analyzing Miles and Huberman model data, namely:

1. Data Reduction  
At this stage, the author filters and focuses the data obtained during data collection, such as the results of interviews, observations, and documents, by recording important points, grouping data based on the research theme, and ignoring irrelevant information.
2. Data Presentation  
After the data is successfully reduced, the next step is for the author to arrange the reduction results in the narrative summary to show the pattern of relationships between the data so that it is easier to understand.
3. Conclusion  
At this stage, the authors draw meaning from the patterns formed, compare data from various sources (triangulation), and verify the validity of the findings by double-checking the field records.

## **Findings**

### **Marketing Strategy on Product and Process Aspects Carried out at MTsN 3 West Aceh**

Marketing strategy allows educational institutions or companies to market their products or services. Marketing activities consist of seven processes that can be passed, including products, prices, venues, promotions, people, processes and physical evidence. However, this study is limited to the aspects of products and processes carried out at MTsN 3 West Aceh.

#### **1. Product Aspects offered by MTsN 3 West Aceh**

Since its establishment, MTsN 3 West Aceh has had various programs that have been carried out, especially in the teaching and learning process. This teaching and

learning process continues to be developed at MTsN 3 West Aceh by collaborating and adapting the learning curriculum to the development of the times and current technology. This madrasah continues to innovate in its learning programs by following technological developments. MTsN 3 West Aceh has produced various new product innovations in the learning program. Some aspects of the products provided at MTsN 3 West Aceh are as follows:

**a. Regular and extracurricular learning programs**

Regular/curricular teaching programs are conducted daily. Regular learning starts Monday to Saturday from 7.15 to 14.00 WIB. Regular learning is filled with subjects that are in accordance with the curriculum. In addition to the madrasah curricular activities, extracurricular activities are followed in the form of afternoon tutoring and other extracurricular activities. As explained by the head of the madrasah:

The educational program at MTsN 3 West Aceh is a regular teaching education program. Then, I added a tutoring program in the afternoon and a program to empower children to guide extracurricular activities related to learning. The extracurricular activities consist of various activities such as scouting, tahfid, sports, arts, Olympic guidance and other activities.

Various extracurricular activities are also adjusted to current needs, such as guidance activities for social studies, science, mathematics and trilingual speech activities. Extracurricular activities are a form of empowerment for students in madrasahs. This was explained by the Vice President of Student Affairs MTsN 3 West Aceh that:

The first educational program at MTsN 3 West Aceh is a curricular teaching program every day from Monday to Saturday. This is followed by tutoring activities in the afternoon in various subjects. There is tahfidz. There is guidance in the Olympiad of Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics, followed by speeches in three languages, Indonesian, Arabic, and English, as well as other extracurricular activities.

The head has explained the existence of curricular and extracurricular activities and vice student of the madrasah. In addition, it was also justified by the parents of the students that "in addition to learning, there are also extracurricular activities that my child participates in. There are tahfidz activities and art activities". This condition was also explained by the students of MTsN 3 West Aceh, who said that I am currently participating in extracurricular activities in volleyball. What distinguishes this madrasah is that there are many extracurricular and morning learning activities, especially special religious lessons".

**b. Digital Classroom Program**

The digital class program is a flagship program at the MTsN 3 West Aceh madrasah. The superior class has used technological aids in their learning activities. Digital classes use a knowledge exploration application in the learning process. The digital class program has been running for 3 years. It continues to be sought to add classes and infrastructure facilities to support this digital class program. As explained by the head of the MTsN 3 West Aceh madrasah:

A flagship program in madrasahs is a digital class exploring knowledge already running. This digital class program has been running for 3 years. The digital class program already has four classes: 2 advanced classes and two classes of independent classes. God willing, the new school year in the future is planned to add more, and the madrasah invites parents to be able to choose digital knowledge exploration. As the next target, there are four classes of 160 students, so 160 accounts will be purchased through parental donations.

The above statement is the same as that of the Vice President of Student Affairs: "Currently, the most interesting program in this madrasah is the digital class. This digital class is all learning systems carried out using IT and assisted by the internet network. This digital class continues to be sought for additional classes and other supporting facilities".

This digital class program distinguishes MTsN 3 West Aceh from other madrasahs in Meulaboh. With these differences in superior programs, this madrasah is a favourite in Meulaboh. As stated by the head of the madrasah that:

This madrasah has a different program from other madrasahs in this area. The first person said that this madrasah is a leading madrasah under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion in Meulaboh. This madrasah is different from other madrasahs, both in the field of learning and its administrative services, which are all digital-based. There is indeed a difference, but not 100%; only this madrasah is somewhat superior to other madrasahs in terms of educational programs and achievements achieved by madrasahs.

Implementing digital classes is the same as learning in regular classes, carried out every Monday to Saturday. Thus, the subjects and implementation of digital classes are the same as in regular classes. However, the teaching staff who use the learning method with the application explore knowledge is directly sent to their respective students' accounts. The learning system is created in a digital room through student accounts, and parents can also monitor the student learning process through their children's accounts. As the head of the madrasah explained, "Implementing learning in digital classrooms has the same schedule as regular classes. It is just that the learning process is carried out through an application that is sent to the student's account. The difference between the regular and digital classroom learning process is only using learning media".



The goal of digital classes is for interested students to have a laptop and pay for the annual application individually, outside the responsibility of the madrasah. As the head of the madrasah explained that:

The goal of digital classes is only for interested students because, in the learning process, they must have a laptop and pay an annual application fee. The digital class fees for last year for some classes cost around Rp. 400,000,- and some are priced at Rp. 800,000. While this year of Rp. 700,000 per student equals all, and the student's parents bear the application fee, including the lessons learned in the digital classroom and all the lessons learned in digital form as well.

Implementing the digital class benefits students in creating a generation that can face digital developments. Students are very interested in this digital class because they can access their learning without limited space and time. Students do not need to provide printed books because digital books are already available in the app.

### **c. Digital library service program and digital administration**

Implementing educational services at MTsN 3 West Aceh is classified as a very good category. In addition to regular learning programs and digital and extracurricular classes, madrasahs also have digital library service programs and digital administration. All programs run in madrasahs have been systemically arranged and digitized in every madrasah education service activity. Administrative and digital library services aim to provide faster and more practical services to all students and everyone in the madrasah. The condition is described by the head of the madrasah as follows:

Other programs in the madrasah also have a digital library whose administration is digital-based. All book needs in the library can be checked digitally. There are also administrative and financial services. So, with digitalization, every service in the madrasah will provide fast and practical services. Those programs have been carried out, and we will continue to carry out these programs in the future.

The exposure of the interview above is also strengthened by the author's direct observation in the madrasah, which shows that the correct programs have been implemented in the madrasah. These programs include the implementation of regular learning, extracurricular activities and digital classes, which are carried out every Monday to Saturday. Regular classes are carried out manually using books and whiteboard learning media. In contrast, digital classes are carried out using the science exploration application, and the digital learning media is carried out in individual student accounts. In addition, digital libraries and administrative processes are carried out digitally so that the digitally assisted activities help education staff work efficiently.

### **d. Alums**

Alums are graduates or student outputs from MTsN 3 West Aceh. MTsN 3 West Aceh alumni have now spread to all schools in West Aceh. Furthermore, until now, MTsN 3 West Aceh graduates have worked in every government and private institution in West Aceh and outside West Aceh. As the head of the madrasah states, "MTsN 3 West Aceh alumni are accepted in all favourite schools in West Aceh such as at SMA Modal Bangsa, MAN 1 West Aceh. In addition, graduates from alumni have worked in every government and private agency".

From the above description, it can be seen that MTsN 3 West Aceh has carried out madrasah programs to the maximum. All programs have been arranged systematically and structured. The main programs carried out in this madrasah are regular and extracurricular learning processes, digital classroom programs and digital library services, digital administration services and alums output who have worked in every government and private agency.

## **2. Aspects of the process carried out at MTsN 3 West Aceh**

The implementation of marketing on the process aspect at MTsN 3 West Aceh is carried out in several stages, including:

### **a. Performance in accordance with Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)**

The implementation of each service program that already exists in the madrasah has been carried out regularly and in accordance with the provisions of the SOPs that have been set. Performance compliance with SOPs is a benchmark of success for madrasahs so that each program service can run smoothly and achieve the planned targets. As explained by the head of the madrasah:

Academic and administrative services are carried out at MTsN 3 West Aceh and continue to work by the SOP. Each performance must be by the SOP that has been made and by the job description that we have given to the education staff in the madrasah and also by the SOP of teachers in the PBM hours that have been prepared by the teaching party of MTsN 3 West Aceh.

The suitability of madrasah performance with SOPs indicates that madrasahs have been running systemically and well structured. By being guided by the SOPs, teachers and education staff perform better.

### **b. Coaching and development of MTsN 3 Meulaboh internal performance**

Improving the quality of the MTsN 3 West Aceh madrasah is also carried out by fostering and developing the internal performance of the madrasah. Teacher performance, administrative performance and improvement of IT skills for all Human Resources in the madrasah. As explained by the head of the madrasah:

Efforts are made to improve the performance of education personnel in madrasahs by empowering them, especially those who have not received a diploma, so that their academics can be improved again. Alhamdulillah, one or two people have

successfully graduated from S1 in administration. Then, the mastery of IT for teachers and administrative staff is also improved again, which is an obligation because all programs run based on the application must automatically be able to run correctly – training teachers and education personnel to improve knowledge and understanding of computer IT. Then, the performance of teachers and employees from morning to 3 pm was also improved; they were encouraged to continue to act professionally so that our targets at MTsN 3 West Aceh were achieved well.

### **c. Maximizing the use of digital in every aspect of performance**

In addition to improving the internal performance of madrasas, madrasas also maximize the use of digital technology so that madrasah's administration performance can run smoothly and quickly. As explained by the head of the madrasah:

Madrasah maximizes the use of digital by using its digital devices, be it computers, laptops, and infocus in learning. Alhamdulillah, we can hold it every year. We can add computers for administrative staff or laptops and computers for students' digital learning devices in computer laboratories.

The conditions depicted above are also the results of the author's observation at the location. In the teaching and learning activities of MTsN 3 West Aceh, every existing performance is by the SOPs determined by the madrasah. In addition, the madrasah also conducts coaching and training for teachers and education staff. It implements digital devices in every performance at MTsN 3 West Aceh.

From the description above, it can be understood that the madrasah has carried out marketing on the process aspect. The process is carried out by adjusting each teacher and administrative duties with existing SOPs, improving the performance of education personnel and maximizing digitalization in each performance process so that these conditions can create fast and practical performance.

Implementing the marketing strategy of educational services, product aspects, and process aspects has positively impacted attracting public interest as consumers of educational services. The community is enthusiastic about registering their children to MTsN 3 West Aceh. This madrasah already has a very good quality and image of education. So that it becomes an attraction for the community to make their children have good quality education as well. As stated by the parents of MTsN 3 West Aceh students:

I am interested in registering my child in this madrasah because MTsN 3 West Aceh is already widely known by the community to have quality, so many people want to send their children to school here. Then, I am interested in sending my children here because many of the generations or graduates from MTsN 3 West Aceh can prove that they are potential students so that when they continue their education to high school, they still look like they have potential. Therefore, we as parents are interested in sending our children here. Because this madrasah is widely known

by the public for its advantages and the wishes of the children themselves, I strongly support it. The teachers in this madrasah are very good at teaching and are very proactive in providing learning. They see students' character and adjust it so that they know the development of students. The infrastructure is still lacking, but it is enough to give the best. We hope that in the future it can be even better.

A good educational image greatly determines people's choice to attend this madrasah. One of the other parents of the students explained that:

I am interested in registering children in this madrasah because it is indeed the child who wants to enter this school, and it is close to home and affordable. In addition, this madrasah is already well-educated. This school has tutoring activities and digital classes. The teachers who teach here are very professional and have adequate facilities.

Parents should also consider having a good religious education when registering their children in this madrasah. As explained by the parents of the students:

I am interested in sending my child to MTsN 3 West Aceh because the religion is good here, and the school activities are also very good. Because of my child's desire and my desire, as well as because I want him to have a strong religious education, the teachers who teach are good. The facilities and infrastructure in this madrasah are adequate to support the teaching and learning process.

From the description above, it can be understood that the marketing strategy carried out by MTsN 3 West Aceh has an impact on increasing the interest of prospective students in registering for the madrasah. Regarding products, MTsN 3 West Aceh holds a regular learning program every morning from Monday to Saturday. The extracurricular activity program consists of various activities, including afternoon lessons, sports activities, art, trilingual speeches and Olympic preparation – the flagship program of the digital class program and the digital library and administration service program. Meanwhile, in the process aspect, MTsN 3 West Aceh has carried out the performance of educators and education staff by SOPs, improving the performance of education staff and maximizing the use of digitalization in every performance process in madrasahs.

### **Obstacles and Solutions in the Implementation of Product and Process Marketing Strategies at MTsN 3 West Aceh**

Marketing strategy is a way for madrasahs to market educational services. Implementing marketing strategies aims to attract students' interest in entering madrasahs. However, in the implementation of madrasah marketing strategies, especially in the aspect of products and madrasah process aspects, facing obstacles in the madrasah yard that are already narrow, lack of funds to complete the supporting facilities for digital activity programs and sometimes internet network disruptions. So,

it hinders the learning process and digital administrative performance. As explained by the head of the madrasah:

The first obstacle is that the atmosphere in this madrasah is already somewhat narrow, the space for movement is somewhat limited, and the second, in terms of funding from BOS, is still lacking because this madrasah is already application-based. Hence, it needs many funds to support its activity programs. There are also limitations to the internet network. However, indeed, the internet or wifi network that has been installed at MTsN 3 West Aceh is quite high or quiet a lot; only sometimes the internet provider Telkom or maybe PLN is constrained by the network so that it is an obstacle for the flight attendants in working in the madrasah.

Another obstacle is also caused by the students, who feel bored participating in extracurricular activities because they have studied in the morning and have to study again in the afternoon. As the student body explained, "The obstacle may be like afternoon lessons; students feel bored because they have studied from morning to evening. Then for other programs, such as recitations where students are uninterested".

Following up on the abovementioned obstacles, MTsN 3 West Aceh made various efforts to solve the obstacles in the program implementation process. So that madrasahs can solve the obstacles faced. As stated by the head of the madrasah that:

The effort is to avoid lacking funds to support the madrasah program. Then, the madrasah prioritizes urgent needs in the implementation of the program. Regarding the narrow scope of the school, the school is applying for the construction of rooms on the upper level. However, the Ministry of Religion must wait for an education decision. So, the use of the room must be maximized. To solve the problem of power outages and internet disruptions, the madrasah warned students to charge their laptop batteries, and the madrasah also prepared offline subject matter.

The madrasah also coordinates with various parties in the madrasah environment so that obstacles can be minimized. The madrasah makes another effort by collaborating on the implementation of learning and evaluation for each activity in the madrasah. As the statement of the Student Affairs Officer explained that:

In our efforts to solve the problem of student boredom, teachers design learning using interesting methods so students are happier when learning. To arouse students' interest in madrasah extracurricular activities, competitions are held in the madrasah environment so that students become more enthusiastic about participating in extracurricular activities. The madrasah also reminds students to fully charge their laptop batteries so that when the power goes out, students can do their assignments without interruption. The madrasah has downloaded and stored every necessary lesson to avoid internet network disruption when studying. Even though the network is disrupted, students continue their studies without dependence on the internet network.

From the exposure of the data above, it is known that the obstacles faced by MTsN 3 West Aceh in carrying out marketing strategies in product and process aspects are due to the narrow space for movement in the madrasah environment, due to the lack of funds to provide complete infrastructure facilities for digitalization activities, due to internet disruptions. In addition, in the process of activities carried out, the obstacles faced are due to the psychological condition of students tired of participating in extracurricular activities. However, the madrasah has carried out activities to overcome the aforementioned obstacles by allocating funds on a priority basis and submitting an application to the Ministry of Religion to construct classrooms at the upper level. To overcome student boredom, the teacher conducts learning collaboration using fun methods and conducting competitions so that students are interested in doing extracurricular activities in the madrasah.

## Discussion

### Product-Based Marketing Strategy.

In marketing educational services, the product is not only limited to teaching materials but includes everything offered to meet its educational needs. (Maisah et al., 2024). MTsN 3 West Aceh understands this well, so it continues to innovate and develop products that not only meet the curriculum's standards but are adjusted to the needs and expectations of the people of West Aceh, as well as adaptive to technological developments. Strengthening regular programs and character- and skill-based enrichment are key in their marketing strategy. The tahfidz Al-Qur'an program, for example, not only equips students with deep religious literacy but also forms noble morals that are the hallmarks of madrasahs.

Meanwhile, the development of academic potential is also well managed through mentoring for science and mathematics olympiad participants and the development of communication skills through trilingual speech (Arabic, English, Indonesian), improving students' academic competitiveness but also preparing students to face global challenges. This is in line with the explanation of Miftahuddin et al. (2024), which emphasizes that market positioning and product differentiation in educational services are key factors in the success of educational institutions in an increasingly competitive market. Service differentiation through innovative programs will strengthen consumers' perception of value, both students and parents. The diversity of this program is also a means of *experiential marketing*. This marketing technique aims to create loyal customers by touching consumers' emotions and fostering positive feelings about products and services (Khosyiin et al., 2024).

Furthermore, MTsN 3 West Aceh also showed courage in making digital innovations through a digital class program based on Jelajah Ilmu. This technology is not only a trend but also an adaptive strategy that accommodates students' digital literacy, strengthens independent learning skills, and supports collaborative learning

relevant to the demands of the 21st century. Educational institutions must continuously adapt and integrate the latest technologies in the curriculum. Thus, education can be more relevant and beneficial for students in facing future challenges (Rozeqqi, 2024). It is known that students today are *digital natives*, so educational institutions such as MTsN 3 West Aceh must adapt their learning style to the use of familiar and interesting technology.

In addition to digital classes, this madrasah also utilizes digital library services to support the quality of educational services. This service will undoubtedly make it easier to access literature and learning resources. At the same time, technology-based administration—from attendance at financial management applications to performance appraisals—will increase the efficiency and transparency of services. This aligns with the theory of quality service, which states that reliability and ease of access to services are the main factors in increasing customer satisfaction. Implementing a good service quality strategy is hoped to increase customer satisfaction and obtain higher customer loyalty. The quality service concept largely determines the organisation's success today (Ma'rufah, 2023).

In addition to the products offered directly, MTsN 3 West Aceh also views alumni as a "long-term product" that reflects the institution's success. Successful alums in various fields are tangible evidence of the quality of madrasah education, and they strengthen the institution's image and reputation in the public's eyes. The promotion of educational institutions can be carried out through the active role of alums who always introduce and promote the institution to the broader community. The role of these alumni brings positive impacts, such as improving the quality and facilities of the institution, the availability of support in the development of new programs, and increasing the interest of prospective students to join. Alums have a significant influence in building public trust in the institution (Munib & Khotimah, 2023). An outstanding alum will encourage effective word of mouth (Hawanur et al., 2024), increasing public trust and building loyalty and interest in prospective new students. This concept is in line with Keller's thinking (1993) in *customer-based brand equity*, which states that positive perceptions of old customers influence future consumer decisions. In other words, alums are not only the result of the educational process but also become ambassadors of madrasahs that bring a good name and promote the success of MTsN 3 West Aceh to a broad audience.

### **Process-Based Marketing Strategy.**

In service marketing, the process plays a crucial role in connecting products or services with consumers (LOVELOCK et al., 2010). In education, the process is not just a formal step in teaching. However, it encompasses the entire experience felt by students, parents, teachers, education staff and other stakeholders. MTsN 3 West Aceh understands the importance of this by designing an adaptive and participatory

learning process. The student-centred learning approach encourages students to actively participate in discussions, collaborations, and learning-based projects (PjBL). This strategy fosters 21st-century creativity and skills and creates a fun and challenging learning atmosphere, which makes learners feel valued. Integrating digital literacy with *blended learning models* further strengthens this process, making technology a bridge for adaptive interaction between teachers, students, and learning content. This approach is also an added value that distinguishes MTsN 3 West Aceh from other institutions because it can provide a learning experience that is both quality and relevant to the times.

Not only in the learning process, MTsN 3 West Aceh also organizes the administrative process with the principles of efficiency and transparency. Technology in attendance, assessment, finance, and communication with parents provides easy real-time access to information. This increases parental trust and satisfaction and strengthens the image of the madrasah as an institution that is adaptive to technological developments and responsive to consumer needs and desires (Moneta & Kurniawan, 2022). This principle is reflected in fast, accurate, and open administrative services, thus creating a harmonious relationship between the madrasah and parents, who feel involved in the educational process of their children.

In addition, the process of accepting new students (PPDB) at MTsN 3 West Aceh is designed professionally and transparently. Clear enrollment is a fair selection system based on the ability of prospective students, such as Qur'an reading tests, basic ability tests and interviews. Transparent and communicative information services also create a positive initial experience for prospective learners and parents. Systematic and standardized PPDB planning helps minimize the potential for errors and confusion. It increases the satisfaction of education service users.

Furthermore, MTsN 3 West Aceh built a solid collaboration process with various stakeholders. Parental involvement is not only in the supervision of learning but also in meetings, decision-making, and program support. Alums are also involved as partners who support students' career development, character development, and madrasah promotion, forming a network that strengthens the institution's position in society. Collaboration between madrasahs and the community adds value and creates a deep *sense of belonging* and sustainable loyalty. Collaboration between educational institutions and the community plays a very important role in improving the quality of education. The involvement of various parties can yield significant benefits. This collaboration not only improves the quality of educational services but also positively impacts social and economic relations in the community (Ali, 2024).

### **Obstacles and Solutions in Strategy Implementation**

The results of this study show that the marketing strategy implemented by MTsN 3 West Aceh, especially in the product and process aspects, has significantly



contributed to increasing the interest of prospective students to apply to MTsN 3 West Aceh. However, implementing this strategy is inseparable from complex challenges from both internal and external factors. Limited land is one of the main obstacles that impact the space for the physical development of the madrasah, resulting in delays in the provision of adequate supporting facilities. Externally, internet network disruptions and power outages hinder the smooth operation of digital-based operations, thus having a direct impact on the learning and administration process. In addition, students' psychological factors, such as fatigue due to excessive activity load, decrease their enthusiasm for participating in additional programs.

MTsN 3 West Aceh has adopted adaptive strategic measures to face these challenges. The submission of new space development to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the optimization of available space, and the procurement of priority-based digital facilities show a *resource-based view* approach that the resources owned have a much more significant role in efforts to gain and maintain a competitive advantage and become an important framework to ensure sustainability and success amid increasingly dynamic competition. (Hernino et al., 2024).

Overall, these findings indicate that although MTsN 3 West Aceh faces similar challenges to other educational institutions, implementing product- and process-based marketing strategies has shown effectiveness in improving the quality of educational services. A comprehensive approach that combines internal strengthening and responsiveness to external dynamics provides a solid foundation for madrasas to become role models in managing a service-based education marketing mix oriented towards the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

## **Conclusion**

Implementing product- and process-based marketing strategies at MTsN 3 West Aceh effectively increases the interest of prospective new students. In terms of products, this madrasah has made innovations such as strengthening regular and extracurricular programs, developing superior programs such as digital classes, and providing educational services that are relevant to the needs of students and the community, and views alumni as "long-term products" that reflect the success of the institution so that it becomes a means of promoting the institution. Meanwhile, in the process aspect, MTsN 3 West Aceh implements a professional service system based on Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), utilizes digital technology to improve administrative and learning efficiency, and builds strong collaboration with stakeholders, including alums and parents. Despite facing obstacles such as limited land, funds, network disruptions, and student saturation, madrasas can overcome them through priority strategies, use of existing space, technological adaptation, and other innovations. This not only increases the positive image of the madrasah but also provides a competitive advantage amid competition from educational institutions.

Based on these findings, the author recommends that the madrasah continue to develop curriculum innovations and superior programs that are adaptive to technological developments and community needs. In addition, there is a need to strengthen collaboration with stakeholders, including alums, parents, and the surrounding community, to support program development and promotion of madrasahs. The government, especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs, is advised to provide support in the form of additional facilities and infrastructure, especially classrooms and digital infrastructure, and increase the budget to support innovative programs. With the implementation of a planned, adaptive, and stakeholder-supported strategy, MTsN 3 West Aceh can be an inspirational model for madrasahs and other schools in developing sustainable education marketing strategies.

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