

# Marketing Management Strategies of Islamic Education Services to Enhance Customer Loyalty: A Case Study of State Islamic Senior High Schools

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**Abstract:** This study aims to describe the planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring of Islamic educational service marketing strategies to maintain customer loyalty and to explore their implications. A descriptive qualitative case study approach was used, with purposive sampling selecting principals as critical informants and vice principals, teachers, students, alums, and parents as supporting informants. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and analyzed using data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that marketing management strategies at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City are implemented but must be fully optimized. Planning involves basic strategies but needs thorough identification, segmentation, positioning, and differentiation. Organizing is relatively effective, with clear task divisions formalized by principal decrees. Implementation follows a marketing mix approach (product, promotion, infrastructure, human resources, and processes), yet promotional efforts still need to be increased. Monitoring is consistently conducted by principals and supporting staff. While customer loyalty is evident, indicated by repeat purchases, recommendations, and cross-product purchases, it is limited to existing market segments and does not reach broader audiences.

**Keywords:** Customer loyalty, Islamic educational service, marketing strategies

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## Introduction

Islamic education plays a crucial role in shaping the character and intellect of young Muslims ([Insyirah & Mustofa, 2023](#); [Komariah & Nihayah, 2023](#); [Nuril'bad & Fatkuroji, 2024](#)). *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) serves as a critical institution in delivering upper-secondary Islamic education, focusing on academic knowledge and the development of Islamic values ([Mohzana et al., 2023](#)). In the increasingly competitive education sector, *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) faces significant challenges in maintaining and enhancing the loyalty of students and parents ([Annur et al., 2022](#); [Luneto, 2023](#)). Effective educational service marketing is crucial given the growing number of alternative educational options available to the community ([Kalenskaya et al., 2013](#)). This study aims to identify and analyze Islamic educational service marketing management strategies that can be applied by *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) to retain customer loyalty and provide valuable contributions to the literature on educational marketing and the practice of Islamic school management.

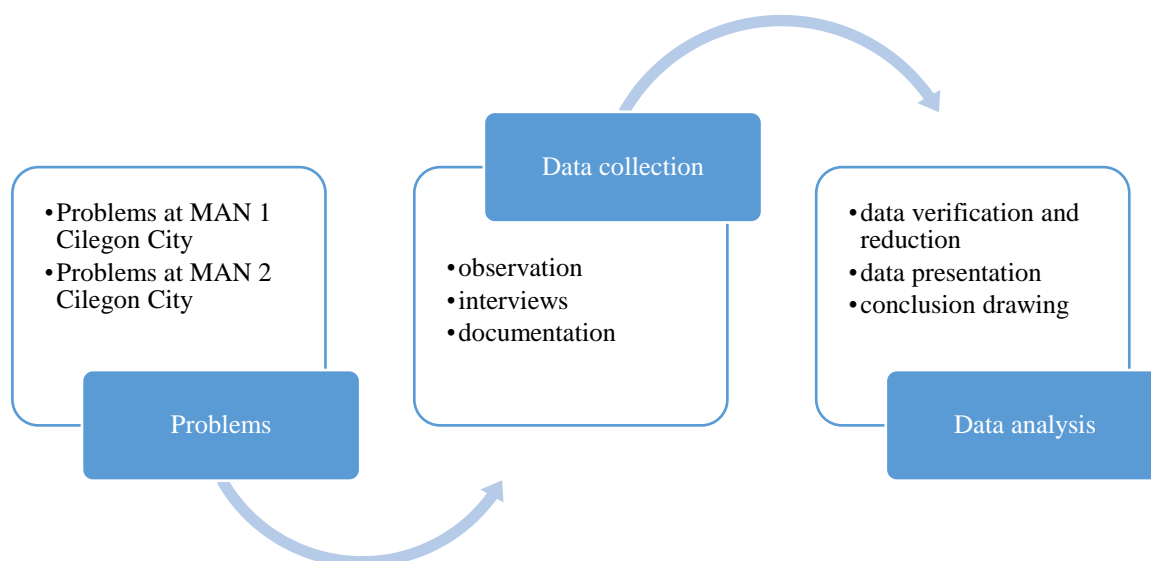
*Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) faces various challenges in maintaining the loyalty of students and parents amid increasing competition from other public and private schools ([Reetz, 2010](#); [Kurniawan & Andriani, 2016](#); [Abdillah et al., 2020](#); [Saefudin & Rokhmani, 2021](#)). A decline or fluctuation in the number of applicants indicates problems in the marketing strategies implemented ([Wijaya, 2022](#)). Although many studies have been conducted on educational service marketing ([Weenink, 2009](#); [Constantinides & Zinck Stagno, 2011](#); [Arafah et al., 2018](#)), most focus on general education, and few specifically examine marketing strategies for *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN).

Although many studies have discussed marketing strategies in education ([Constantinides & Zinck Stagno, 2011](#); [Arafah et al., 2018](#)), most focus on general educational institutions. Consequently, the effective marketing strategies for *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) remain underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the Islamic educational service marketing strategies implemented by *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) in Cilegon City. The research aims to outline the planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring of Islamic educational service marketing strategies to maintain customer loyalty and explore their implications.

## Research Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research approach with a case study design. The research was conducted at *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* (MAN) across Cilegon City. The sample was selected purposively, with the head of the madrasah acting as the primary key informant and vice principals, teachers, students, alums, and parents as secondary informants. Data

collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis followed a continuous analysis model involving data verification and reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.



**Figure 1** The flowchart method

## Result and Discussion

The planning of Islamic educational service marketing strategies to maintain customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City has yet to reach the desired optimal level. The theoretical framework for marketing strategy planning for madrasahs involves several vital stages: identification, segmentation, positioning, differentiation, communication, and service. It aims to ensure that madrasahs comprehensively understand their consumers' preferences before launching marketing initiatives.

The organization of Islamic educational service marketing strategies to retain customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City is managed by the head of the madrasah through official decrees. These decrees regulate various activities, such as appointing the new student admission committee, assigning vice principals, and distributing teaching and additional tasks to teachers. This organization enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of resource utilization in achieving goals. The head of the madrasah is expected to carefully manage allocating tasks, authority, and responsibilities among organization members, considering feasibility and propriety.

Implementing Islamic educational service marketing strategies to retain customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City generally involves all seven marketing mix elements. However, some elements still need to be fully maximized. Given their interconnectedness in developing

marketing strategies to compete among madrasahs, these elements will achieve optimal results if implemented together and integrally. These marketing mix elements include product, place, price, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process. To retain customer loyalty, MAN 1 and 2 Cilegon City must carefully plan, organize, implement, and monitor these marketing mix elements.

Supervision of Islamic educational service marketing strategies to retain customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City is formally conducted by the head of the madrasah, with assistance from vice principals, class guardians, and the school committee. This supervision aims to ensure all marketing aspects run according to plan and are carried out consistently and continuously, whether daily, weekly, monthly, semesterly, or annually. It aligns with Ryńca & Ziaean (2021) that supervision aims to ensure that every element of the marketing mix is executed as planned.

Customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City has been established. It is reflected in repeat purchases, recommendations to others, cross-product and service purchases, and resistance to competitors' inducements. However, this loyalty is currently limited to the existing market segment and has yet to reach a broader segment. One contributing factor is the suboptimal marketing promotion activities. The quality of services provided by MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City is quite good, but all stakeholders need to enhance the quality of educational service delivery.

Satisfaction, trust, emotional aspects, convenience, experience, and product image influence customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City. Consumer satisfaction is affected by the quality of services provided, which includes tangibles (physical facilities), reliability (accuracy and consistency in service delivery), responsiveness (willingness and ability to help and respond to consumer requests), assurance (the behavior of school stakeholders in building consumer trust), and empathy (understanding consumer problems and prioritizing their interests while providing personal attention)..

## Planning

In the educational service marketing strategy at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City, the planning stage must focus on designing a unique educational service product based on essential features compared to other educational services. These distinctive features and elements can be identified through differences in educational service products such as form, characteristics, performance, curriculum, and durability. Service is a crucial aspect, including optimal service to educational service clients (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012; Coelho & Henseler, 2012; Ali et al., 2016) and ease of access to education-related information and service management (Zhang et al., 2020; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2021).

Image management is also essential. It encompasses how the public perceives the educational service products offered, including symbols like buildings or structures that reflect customer expectations. Employee qualifications, such as teachers with at least a master's degree, should be prioritized. A good investment should benefit the educational institution, be necessary to customers, and be communicated.

According to Mudie and Pirrie (2012), the planning stage in educational service marketing strategy is crucial for increasing the appeal of educational institutions. Designing educational service products uniquely with attention to features important to consumers is critical. Ali et al. (2016) state that the quality of higher education services affects student satisfaction, which in turn affects institutional image and student loyalty. Distinctive elements in educational service products, such as innovative curricula, superior teacher performance, and adequate facilities, significantly impact consumer perception and satisfaction (Fosu & Poku, 2014; Dora, 2018; Tandilashvili, 2019).

Mudie and Pirrie (2012) also emphasize that optimal service to educational service clients is crucial to marketing strategy. Institutions that provide friendly, responsive, high-quality service achieve higher consumer satisfaction. Research by Munteanu et al. (2010), Khoo et al. (2017), and Herman (2022) reinforce that service impacts consumer satisfaction in education. Therefore, MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City must prioritize staff training and development to deliver quality services.

Research by Karimah et al. (2023) highlights the critical role of image management in educational service marketing strategy. A positive image of the educational institution can increase public interest and trust. Junaidi et al. (2021) suggest marketing modeling by adopting offline and online models. Therefore, MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City need to pay attention to how they are perceived by the public and strive to build a strong and positive image through various promotional activities and interactions with stakeholders.

## Organizing

The headmasters have organized educational service marketing management strategies at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City. This is implemented through the issuance of headmaster decrees for various activities such as forming new student admission committees, appointing deputy headmasters, assigning teaching duties, and assigning additional teacher tasks. This organization can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of resource use in achieving goals. The principals must manage the distribution of tasks, authority, and responsibilities well, considering appropriateness and feasibility.

Implementing this organization by the headmasters has proven effective in improving the performance of educational organizations ([Zaini et al., 2023](#)). The issuance of headmaster decrees for various activities helps improve coordination and efficiency in resource management. Furthermore, Cooper ([2012](#)), Sallis ([2014](#)), and Hislop et al. ([2018](#)) highlight the importance of task and responsibility management in educational organizations. When tasks and responsibilities are well managed, organization members tend to be more engaged and perform better. It positively impacts the achievement of organizational goals, including improving the quality of educational services and maintaining customer loyalty, which is the focus of this research.

## Implementation

Based on the research findings, implementing educational service marketing management strategies at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City has incorporated the seven marketing mix elements. However, some elements still need to be fully optimized. However, these elements will be more effective if implemented in an integrated and holistic manner, considering their interrelated roles in achieving competitive advantage among madrasahs. These marketing mix elements include product, place, price, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process. The marketing program's primary focus is the educational service product, encompassing everything the madrasah offers to meet consumer needs. Pricing of services is also a critical factor, as it is adjusted to market conditions, target consumers, and the structure of the educational industry.

Proper integration of the marketing mix elements positively impacts educational institutions' marketing performance and competitive advantage ([Constantinides & Zinck Stagno, 2011](#)). It means that by implementing an integrated approach to the marketing mix, madrasahs can achieve the desired marketing objectives. Additionally, the location of educational services (place) plays a crucial role, with strategic location selection enhancing consumer convenience and satisfaction. Promotion of educational services through various media, such as electronic, print, and online, is vital for conveying information and influencing consumer perception.

The human factor (people) in providing educational services is also vital in influencing consumer perception. High-quality, friendly, competent teachers and reliable administrative staff are valuable assets for the madrasah. Physical evidence of services, including physical facilities and documentation supporting service quality, is also a determining factor. Educational service processes must be well-managed, including effective and quality learning processes. Strict supervision of the marketing strategy implementation is crucial to ensuring the success of the marketing program.

## Supervision

Supervision of the Islamic education service marketing management strategy to maintain customer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City is officially conducted by the head of the madrasah with the support of the vice principals, class guardians, and school committees. Supervision in the marketing management strategy at both institutions ensures that all marketing aspects are executed according to the established plan. This supervision is carried out regularly and continuously, with schedules covering daily, weekly, monthly, semesterly, and yearly intervals. This supervision focuses on verifying whether the marketing mix elements are operating as planned.

Issues that often arise within an organization are frequently caused by a lack of supervision, resulting in deviations from the established plan. Supervision has unique characteristics in Islam, encompassing material and spiritual aspects. Supervision is carried out not only by managers and Allah *subhanahu wata'ala*, using methods that respect human dignity. Marzano et al. (2011) affirm that supervision has several important objectives to achieve, including stopping or reducing errors, deviations, fraud, wastage, obstacles, and injustices that may occur; preventing the recurrence of the same errors and deviations in the future; fostering better habits or enhancing existing good habits; fostering an open, honest, participatory, and responsible organizational atmosphere; enhancing the overall functioning of the organization; improving organizational performance overall; providing insight and evaluation of organizational functions; and guiding management to correct identified performance issues.

## Implications

Consumer loyalty at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City has been established, evidenced by repeat purchases, word-of-mouth recommendations, and resilience against competitor allure. However, it remains limited to existing market segments due to suboptimal promotion. Service quality has been satisfactory, but stakeholders must enhance service delivery to attract potential consumers. Satisfaction, trust, emotions, convenience, experience, and product image influence consumer loyalty in both MANs. Steps that can be taken include expanding marketing promotions, maintaining service quality, and developing existing products or departments to meet consumer needs. Pricing strategies must also be maintained to avoid burdening parents and remain dominant in maintaining consumer loyalty.



## Conclusions

The marketing management strategy for Islamic education services at MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City has been implemented, yet it needs to be implemented optimally. Although the planning, organization, implementation, and supervision stages have been carried out, deficiencies and suboptimalities persist in each phase. Planning needs more depth regarding the identification, segmentation, positioning, and differentiation of madrasah services. While the organization has been relatively adequate, improvements are still needed to ensure better integration and efficiency. Implementation of the strategy with a marketing mix approach has commenced, but there is still room to enhance promotions for greater effectiveness. Formal and consistent supervision has been conducted, yet customer loyalty remains limited to existing market segments. Recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of this strategy include deepening planning with more thorough identification and segmentation, improving promotions with a more innovative approach, and maintaining consistency in supervision to ensure better execution. These findings imply that with improved, more optimal marketing strategies, MAN 1 and MAN 2 Cilegon City have the potential to enhance customer loyalty and reach broader markets, which in turn will support the achievement of their educational goals.

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