

Marketing Strategy For Madrasa Quality In Increasing Interest In Education Customers (Multisite Study At Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung And Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri)

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Abstract.

This dissertation is based on the results of the researcher's observations regarding the conditions of madrasa marketing at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri and its role in efforts to increase the interest of educational customers. The problem formulation in this research is: (1) How does madrasa branding increase the interest of educational customers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri? (2) How does madrasa differentiation increase the interest of educational customers? (3) How does madrasa positioning increase the interest of educational customers? (4) How does madrasa direct marketing increase the interest of educational customers?. This dissertation aims to find and describe madrasa quality marketing strategies in the form of branding, differentiation, positioning, and direct marketing in increasing the interest of educational customers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri, where the researcher conducted qualitative research and is a type of research with a multisite research design. Data collection techniques were carried out using (1) in-depth interviews, (2) participant observation, and (3) documentation. Data analysis was carried out in two ways, namely single site analysis with data collection, data condensation, data display and drawing conclusion steps, then continued with cross-site analysis. Checking the validity of the data is carried out using credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability tests. The results of this research found that: The marketing strategy for madrasa quality in increasing the interest of educational customers is carried out by: a) branding, displaying the basic character of the madrasa in the form of mottos and slogans; b) differentiation, creating madrasas that have special services; c) positioning, implementing early admission patterns for new students and various levels of student admission schemes; d) direct marketing, direct marketing through the school website, promotion of madrasa success both in competitions at various levels and acceptance at universities as well as selection of outstanding female students through the student achievement program, and e) selected door to door, going directly to find and recruit students with achievement.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Madrasa Quality and Educational Customer Interest.

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has inevitably become a trend for every organization, whether business, social, or educational organizations. With globalization, competition is not only with state educational institutions but also private and international schools. However, along with the very rapid development of the world of education, this is not free from various kinds of tough and varied challenges and the development of the world of education is also accompanied by very fierce competition at all regional, national, and even worldwide levels. Entering the era of globalization, where competition has entered all walks of life. A portrait of the challenges for educational institutions in the future is that there is high competition so many educational institutions offer services, increasing demands from customers or students, especially on quality and costs, advances in communication, information and computer technology which are changing all aspects of life, and so on. The efforts that have been made will also be less than optimal without being supported by a system of public relations in Islamic educational institutions which is an activity that is translated into creating harmonious cooperation between educational institutions and their communities.¹ Excellent programs are created and developed based on demands and needs as a result of globalization in order to have high competitiveness. These programs are designed, developed and implemented in educational institutions so that they are quality and competitive.

Quality and highly competitive education can be used as a basis for and efforts to improve the quality of human resources.²Islamic educational institutions are also growing rapidly in terms of number and capacity. Islamic educational institutions which have an explosion in the number of new students every year must be able to respond to the challenges of current developments in the form of increasing the foundation of Islamic spirituality in participants and fulfilling demands for technological developments in all aspects. Quality and quality assurance have been deemed essential to lifting the economy out of recession. Components of educational organizations are increasingly realizing the importance of quality with changes in the world order that have created new challenges for them. Quality, demand and quality assurance aim to attract and satisfy customers. Educational organizations must have a quality assurance system as part of their management.³Madrasas as one of the Islamic educational institutions, which are service organizations, really need to market the services they have. Marketing of madrasa services is not aimed at commercializing madrasas or ignoring the aspect of sincerity which has been the main slogan for the provision of Islamic education.

However, marketing madrasa services is a form of moral responsibility of madrasa managers to Islamic society. Madrasas are currently also facing extraordinary challenges from madrasa "competitors", both fellow Islamic educational institutions (fellow MA/MAN and Islamic Boarding Schools), as well as general educational institutions, for example SMA/SMK which continue to develop and are in demand by many consumers.⁴The Islamic educational institutions in Tulungagung and Kediri areas which are currently growing and developing rapidly are Islamic educational institutions, have a very high annual growth in interest in educational services and rapidly developing educational infrastructure, two Islamic educational institutions, namely MAN 1 Tulungagung and MAN 1 Kota Kediri a school that is a reference and main destination for prospective students who wish to continue to the Madrasah Aliyah level. This is proven by data on students who register for MAN 1 Tulungagung and MAN 1 Kota Kediri, which always far exceeds the quota every year. This is based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with the Head of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri.

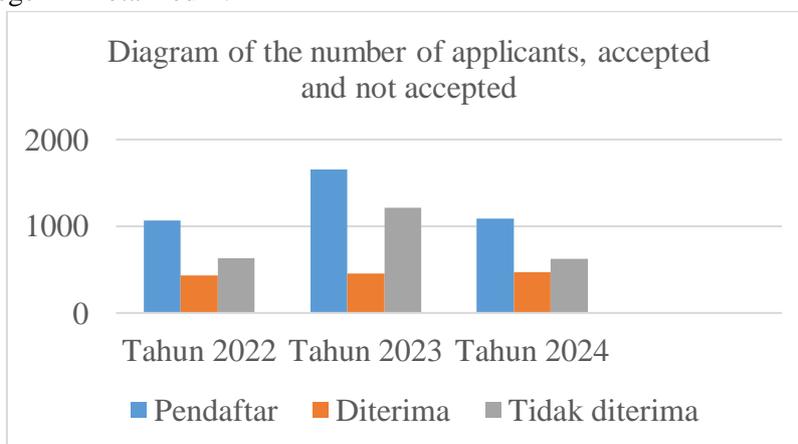


Fig 1.1. The Number of Applicants in MAN 1 Kota Kediri⁵

The development of number of applicants at MAN 1 Kota Kediri is experiencing growth, this requires strategic steps in the process of conveying information including the achievements of female students, both regional and national level achievements as well as the number of admissions to higher education with details in 2021 of 249 students, in 2022 as many as 257 students, and in 2023 there will be 276 students. Just like at MAN 1 Kota Kediri, the number of educational customers interested in registering at MAN 1 Tulungagung is also growing from year to year. In 2022, the number of students registering for

MAN 1 Tulungagung will be 656 students, with details of 358 students being accepted and 298 students being rejected. Meanwhile, in 2023 the number of students registering for MAN 1 Tulungagung will be 597 students, with details of 401 students being accepted and 196 students being rejected.

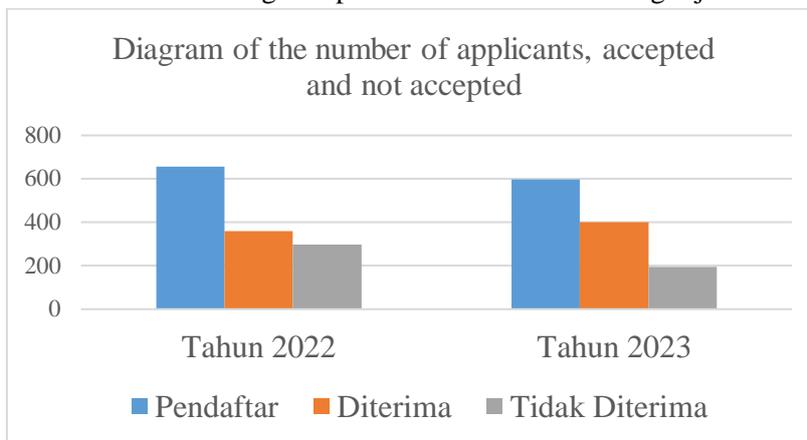


Fig 1.2. The Number of Applicants in MAN 1 Tulungagung⁶

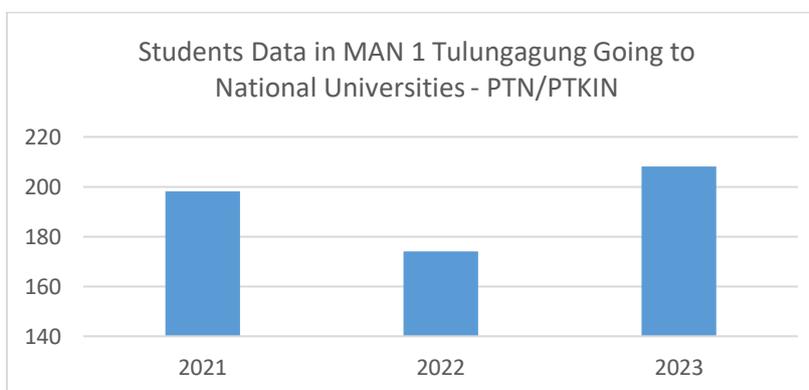


Fig 1.3. Data on the number of MAN 1 Tulungagung graduates who going to National Universities

The number of graduates accepted at National Universities is also an attraction for students to register at MAN 1 Tulungagung, therefore MAN 1 Tulungagung focuses on academic quality such as the Olympics. However, this does not mean that MAN 1 Tulungagung will ignore its non-academic qualities, MAN 1 Tulungagung is now starting to develop non-academic qualities, such as providing vocational training (which is now called skills) for students to prepare for when they graduate. MAN 1 Tulungagung and MAN 1 Kota Kediri which the researchers have stated above have academic and non-academic advantages as well as achievements in acceptance to the next level of education, which is supported by data on the increasing interest of educational customers in the two madrasas. This cannot be separated from the existence of a marketing strategy for madrasa quality carried out by the madrasa head and his supporting stakeholders. For this reason, researchers are very interested in examining the marketing strategies implemented at MAN 1 Tulungagung and MAN 1 Kota Kediri, with research entitled "Marketing Strategy for Madrasah Quality in Increasing Interest in Education Customers" at MAN 1 Tulungagung and MAN 1 Kota Kediri. Implementing an appropriate marketing strategy for madrasa quality is a necessity so that Islamic educational institutions can compete in marketing themselves to be able to realize their goals, show their existence, gain the interest of students and parents as educational customers, and be able to develop and compete during intense competition with existing Islamic educational institutions other educational institutions as well as general educational institutions, both state educational institutions and private

educational institutions so that with a marketing strategy the quality of these madrasas will be able to increase the interest of educational customers.

Today, many educational institutions are competing to attract customer interest through various marketing strategies. Therefore, madrasas as one of the Islamic educational institutions must strive to implement marketing strategies that can attract the interest of educational customers. One of the strategies used is a quality marketing strategy which aims to attract the interest of educational customers by showcasing the advantages of madrasas compared to other educational institutions. The marketing strategy for madrasa quality in increasing the interest of educational customers is also an effort to maintain the existence and develop Islamic educational institutions according to educational quality standards. The paradigm (point of view) of this research is a conceptualization of the relationship between various things that is used to indicate the direction of research so that this research can run within a predetermined scope. The quality marketing strategy in this research includes four aspects, namely branding, differentiation, positioning, and direct marketing of quality education as an attractive effort to increase the interest of educational customers. The paradigm of this research can be observed in the chart below.

II. METHODS

This research seeks to find and examine Marketing Strategy for Madrasa Quality in Increasing Interest in Education Customers: Multisite Study at MAN 1 Kota Kediri and MAN 1 Tulungagung with a research focus, namely madrasa branding, madrasa differentiation, madrasa positioning, and madrasa marketing. In this research, researchers will use a qualitative approach and descriptive form (qualitative descriptive) with a multisite study design. This approach was taken because in this research the researcher was trying to examine social phenomena at MAN 1 Kota Kediri and MAN 1 Tulungagung which were related to marketing strategies for the quality of madrasas which took place naturally or naturally, as well as trying to explain the existing reality and describe the situation and all its aspects. Qualitative research is research that intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by the object of research, for example behavior, perception, motivation for action, etc., as a whole and using descriptions in the form of words and language in a special, natural context with utilize the scientific method.⁷This approach is directed at the background of the entire organization.

So in this case we must not isolate individuals or organizations into variables or hypotheses, but we need to view them as part of a whole. Likewise, this research can be classified as descriptive research, a multisite study, the main characteristic of which is to replicate the findings in each site and then draw conclusions. This research uses a multisite study research design, namely a research design involving two sites and research subjects. The research subjects are assumed to have the same characteristics. A multisite study design is a form of qualitative research design that is used primarily to develop theories drawn from several similar research settings so that theories can be produced that can be transferred to broader situations and are more general in scope. In this study, the researcher attempted to dig in depth at two locations of Islamic Senior High School that are considered to have similar characteristics and similarities to the object under study, namely Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri.

III. FINDINGS

1. Found in MAN 1 Tulungagung

Marketing strategies of madrasa quality in increasing the interest of educational customers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung with direct marketing, promotion, branding, differentiation and positioning are strategic steps taken by madrasas to increase the interest of educational customers :

- a. Marketing strategy for madrasa quality with branding *madrasah Digital, Mandiri, Berprestasi*.

Brand naming that differentiates madrasas from others. Imaging the madrasa as something different from the others. Implementation of marketing strategies with branding, namely: a) Branding *madrasah digital*, the real digital madrasa; b) Branding with *madrasah mandiri prestasi*; c) Branding digital madrasa, *madrasah mandiri prestasi*.

b. Marketing strategy for madrasa quality with differentiation by *SKS* program, *Madrasah Riset*, and *Madrasah unggul Akademik*.

MAN 1 Tulungagung strives to create a positive difference in the eyes of customers and is different from what competitors offer. strategic implementation of marketing with differentiation, namely: a) Creating superior madrasas with digital madrasas, the real digital madrasas, superior academic madrasas, organizers of credit and accelerated programs, research madrasas, tahfudzul quran madrasas, madrasas plus skills.

c. Marketing strategy for madrasa quality with positioning through the implementation of earlier acceptance of new students than other institutions and through various admission channels.

Positioning is the position a service occupies in the market's mind when facing fierce competition. Marketing strategies with differentiation are: a) carrying out positioning by - communicating madrasa marketing early through new student admission: Achievement pathway, regular pathway, and cross-provincial pathway as well as golden tickets from science competitions; b) The positioning carried out by the MAN 1 Tulungagung cross-provincial new student admission program has a Development Team consisting of: Several Professors from Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah State Islamic University (UIN SATU), a madrasa quality assurance team, teachers who are competent in their fields.

d. Marketing strategy for madrasa quality with direct marketing through Social Media and *Gelegar Prestasi*.

Delivery of madrasa information directly to customers through several information channels owned by the madrasa such as websites and social media to convey information about the educational services offered and the achievements obtained. Implementation of marketing strategies with direct marketing, namely: a) Representative appearance of the madrasa website; b) The madrasa website displays a series of information that is easy to access, both madrasa profiles and various human social media; c) All madrasa activities are published on the madrasa website in the form of videos and text news.

2. Found in MAN 1 Kota Kediri

Marketing strategies of madrasa quality in increasing the interest of educational customers at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri with *branding*, *differentiation*, *positioning*, dan *direct marketing*. This is a strategic step taken by madrasas to increase the interest of educational customers:

a. Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with branding in the form of Achievement, Vocational and Religious Madrasas.

Brand naming that differentiates madrasas from others. Imaging the madrasa as something different from the others. Implementation of marketing strategies with branding, namely: a) Branding Islamic senior high school, *religi vokasi prestasi*; b) Prioritizing academics as an adjustment to skills that have stood out.

b. Marketing strategy for madrasa quality with differentiation through vocational programs.

MAN 1 Kota Kediri strives to create a positive difference in the eyes of customers and is different from what competitors offer. implementation of marketing strategies with differentiation, namely: a) Vocational-based academic madrasas; b) Offering various types of skills or vocations to students.

c. Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with positioning through early new student admission and recruiting new students for high achieving students.

MAN 1 Kota Kediri strives to communicate your services and brand so that they enter the minds of consumers. Positioning is the position a service occupies in the market's mind when facing fierce competition. The marketing strategy with differentiation is: a) no longer conducting on-the-road or on the spot visits to junior high schools and MTs around the city and district of Kediri to attract high achieving students except for special route selection; b) opening PPDB registration early and getting many prospective registrants but only a small number of them qualify; c) has the attraction of being a vocational-based school

which includes 9 skills, namely 1. Electrical Power Installation Engineering; 2. Culinary Art; 3. Fashion Design; 4. Motorcycle Engineering and Business; 5. Automotive Light Vehicle Engineering; 6. Textile crafts + batik; 7. Multimedia; 8. Facial and Hair Beauty; 9. Robotics.

d. Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with direct marketing through digital marketing, print media, and searching for superior students.

Delivery of madrasah information directly to customers through several information channels owned by the madrasah such as websites and social media to convey information about the educational services offered and the achievements obtained. implementing strategic marketing with direct marketing, namely: 1) Presenting a madrasah website that is updated with the school's profile, achievements, e-learning and social media; 2) madrasah science competition for golden tickets: 3) search for superior students.

3. Found in cross-site

Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs in increasing the interest of educational customers with direct marketing, promotion, branding, differentiation and positioning are strategic steps taken by madrasahs in an effort to increase the interest of educational customers:

a. Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with *branding*.

Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with branding, is: Branding madrasahs with their uniqueness, whether in the form of madrasah slogans or madrasah jargon which can create interest, such as independent high achieving madrasahs or religious vocational achievement madrasahs.

b. Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with *differentiation*.

Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with *differentiation* is : Creating madrasahs that have certain specifications or certain advantages, such as superior academic and skill madrasahs

c. Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with *positioning*.

Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with *positioning* is : carry out positioning by communicating madrasah marketing which is the basis for consumer memory as well as various positioning patterns such as doing something earlier, diversifying marketing patterns.

d. Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with *direct marketing*.

Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with direct marketing, is: the display of representative madrasah websites, promotion of banners and displays as well as limited science and door-to-door competitions (selected door-to-door) as a search for superior students.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Marketing Strategies Of Madrasah Quality In Increasing The Interest Of Educational Customers

Based on research findings regarding madrasah quality marketing strategies in increasing the interest of educational customers, this is done through branding, differentiation, positioning and direct marketing. This is a strategic step madrasahs took to increase the interest of educational customers.:

1. *Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with branding.*

Marketing strategy for quality madrasahs with branding carried out by Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri, namely: Branding digital madrasahs, the real digital madrasahs, Branding with *Madrasah Mandiri Prestasi*, Branding Digital Madrasah, *Madrasah Mandiri Prestasi*, Branding *Madrasah Aliyah plus Akademik*, re-prioritizing academics as an adjustment to skills that have stood out. Islamic educational institutions must improve the quality of output and outcomes so in the end they can attract public interest. In other words, the quality of graduates can automatically answer the stages of public unawareness and ignorance regarding the superiority of Islamic educational institutional The brand is an intangible concept. To simplify and make it easier to understand, it is often equated with more

tangible marketing communication elements that support it in the form of advertisements, logos, taglines, jingles, – but actually, brands are more than that.⁸

The results of this research by Kotler and Freind that companies must manage their brands carefully create brand awareness and build preference and loyalty. Ultimately, companies need to audit their brand strengths and weaknesses regularly.⁹ Within the scope of the madrasa, branding is carried out by taking superior programs held within the madrasa. Madrasas that organize skills programs can brand themselves as vocational madrasas, and madrasas that organize learning on a digital basis can brand themselves as digital madrasas. This branding aims to make it easier for educational customers to remember the madrasa according to the characteristics that are highlighted or used as branding.

2. *Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with differentiation.*

Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with differentiation carried out by Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri is: Creating superior madrasas with digital madrasas, the real digital madrasas, superior academic madrasas, organizers of credit and acceleration programs, research madrasas, madrasas tahfudzul Quran, madrasa plus skills (multimedia, culinary, fashion, make-up and beauty), vocational-based academic madrasa, offering various types of skills or vocations to students. A differentiation strategy is an effort to create a positive difference in the eyes of customers and be different from what competitors offer. As the first element of marketing tactics, differentials must create a true difference and distinctive product for customers. Products must not only be perceived differently by customers but must be truly different in terms of content, context and infrastructure. Marketing strategy through differentiation and positioning consists of three steps, namely: 1) identifying a series of differentiating competitive advantages to build a position; 2) choosing the right competitive advantage and; 3) choosing an overall positioning strategy. The company must communicate effectively and convey the chosen position to the market. Through product differentiation, brands can be differentiated based on features, performance or style, and design.¹⁰

3. *Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with positioning.*

Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with positioning carried out by Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri, namely by: Carrying out positioning by communicating marketing of madrasas through Acceptance of New Students through several channels, namely: achievement route, regular route, and route cross-provincial as well as golden tickets from science competitions, Positioning which is carried out with the cross-provincial New Student Admissions program supported by a development team consisting of: several professors from Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah State Islamic University (UIN SATU), a madrasa quality assurance team, and teachers who are competent in their fields. Apart from that, the positioning strategy implemented is to open admissions to new students earlier than other educational institutions. Positioning is the position a service occupies in the market's mind, which is used when facing fierce competition, making it difficult for consumers to remember our product or brand. Brand Positioning is carried out to facilitate consumer memories, so that consumers place our brand at the top of their mind and stick it in the black box, and become loyal.

Positioning is related to efforts to identify, develop and communicate distinctive and unique advantages. Thus, the company's services are perceived as superior and special (distinctive) compared to competitors' services in consumer perception. The main focus of service positioning is the customer's perception of the service product produced and not just the physical product.¹¹ The results of this research by Kotler and Freind are differentiation and positioning consist of three steps: identifying a series of differentiating competitive advantages to build a position, choosing the right competitive advantages, and choosing an overall positioning strategy. The company must communicate effectively and convey the chosen

position to the market. Through product differentiation, brands can be differentiated based on features, performance, or style and design.¹² Positioning is the act of designing a company's offering and image so that it occupies a special place in the minds of the target market. The goal is to place the brand in the minds of consumers to maximize potential benefits for the company. Good brand positioning helps guide marketing strategy by clarifying the essence of the brand, what goals consumers want to achieve, and how they do it in a unique way.¹³

4. *Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with direct marketing.*

Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with direct marketing, namely: a representative display of the madrasa website, the madrasa website displays a series of information that is easily accessible, both madrasa profiles and various madrasa social media, all madrasa activities are published on the madrasa website in the form of videos and text news, presenting the website Madrasa is updated with profiles, achievements, e-learning and school social media, socializing Madrasa slogans: *Prestasi – vokasi – religi*. The results of this research by Kotler and others that direct and digital marketing involve direct engagement with individual consumers and carefully targeted customer communities to obtain immediate responses and build lasting customer relationships. Companies use direct marketing to tailor their offerings and content to the needs and interests of specific segments or individual buyers, direct and digital marketing is convenient, easy and personal. They give shoppers anywhere, anytime access to a nearly unlimited assortment and a wealth of product and purchasing information. Through direct marketing, buyers can interact with sellers over the phone or on the seller's website or mobile app to configure the information, products, or services they want and then order them on the spot.

Finally, for consumers who want it, digital marketing via online, mobile and social media provides a sense of brand engagement and community – a platform for sharing information and experiences.¹⁴The results of this research by Kotler and Freind that direct marketing and digital marketing involve direct engagement with individual consumers and carefully targeted customer communities to obtain responses and build lasting customer relationships. Companies use direct marketing to tailor their offerings and content to the needs and interests of specific segments or individual buyers. In this way, they build customer engagement, brand community, and sales and promotions.¹⁵Marketing strategy for quality madrasas with direct marketing through promotions carried out by Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Tulungagung and Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Kota Kediri, is: displaying student success on a representative madrasa website, banners in front of the madrasa displaying a series of student achievements accepted by national universities, success banners displayed on the corners of road intersections for promotional efforts, promotions are carried out through websites, social media, banners and print media regarding madrasa achievements, promotions that increase the value of madrasas the most are promotions related to the number of students admitted to national universities or Islamic national universities.

To carry out promotions to be effective, it is necessary to have a promotional mix, namely the optimal combination of various types of activities or the type of promotional activities that are most effective in increasing sales. In educational institutions such as madrasas, quality marketing can be done by displaying or publishing the achievements of the madrasa or the students of the madrasa. Apart from that, it can also be done by communicating the superior programs owned by the Madrasa. This publication can be done by combining various methods, whether through social media, print media, or by events organized by the madrasa.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the research focus, data presentation, and research findings regarding marketing strategies for madrasa quality in increasing the interest of educational customers in the two Islamic Seni, the following conclusions can be made:

1. Branding as a marketing strategy for the quality of madrasas in increasing the interest of high-achieving customers is implemented by branding them as *madrasa digital*, the real digital madrasas, *mandiri prestasi*, *madrasah dengan prestasi plus keterampilan*.

2. Differentiation is carried out as a marketing strategy for madrasa quality in increasing the interest of educational customers, namely creating superior madrasas through, among others, superior academic madrasas, organizing semester and accelerated credit programs, research madrasas, organizing tahfidzul Qur'an, plus skills madrasas (multimedia, culinary arts, etc. fashion, make-up and beauty), as well as offering various types of skills or vocational programs to students.

3. Positioning carried out by madrasas as a strategy to increase the interest of educational customers, including through early new student admission, as well as new student admission by achievement - regular - and cross-provincial supported by a development team consisting of several professors at UIN SATU Tulungagung and the team madrasa quality guarantee, as well as selected students by golden tickets from science competitions.

4. Direct marketing is carried out by madrasas as a marketing strategy for madrasa quality, namely publication of madrasa achievements and madrasa students through social media and madrasa websites which are presentative and attractive, quality marketing through print media such as banners and newspapers, as well as selected door to door which aims to attract students who have achievements.

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