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Effective Promotion Strategy of Integrated Islamic Education Institutions in Modern Society

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Abstract	Education is considered a service product produced by non-profit educational institutions to show the results of the educational process. This research aims to determine the management promotion strategy to compete with other Islamic educational institutions in modern society. This research focuses on Al-Fityan School Medan, North Sumatra, a leading Islamic school comprising RA, SDIT, SMPIT, and SMAIT. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type, with data collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analysis process began when the researcher arrived at the research location; after the data was collected, the analysis was carried out through data conditioning, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that the concept of competitive promotion management in this institution includes excellent programs, the idea of a strong determination to carry out worship, the idea of mastering global languages, and the idea of improving skills, especially in science and technology. The implications include the potential for developing an integrated Islamic education promotion strategy. The findings also open up opportunities for further research in education management and competitive promotion.
Keywords	Religious Education; School Promotion; Islamic Education; Modern Society; Integrated Islamic Schools

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1. INTRODUCTION

The management of academic units plays an important role in advancing the national education system concerning the values of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Sulistianingsih et al., 2022). The school/madrasah-based management approach is implemented at the primary and secondary education levels as part of efforts to continuously improve the quality of education (Parra-Monserrat et al., 2021). The managers of Islamic education institutions consistently innovate and are committed to developing the institutions they lead to achieve higher levels of excellence. In general, the management of educational institutions is identified as the management of business organizations that must adapt to the dynamics and demands of stakeholders (Maemonah et al., 2023). Positive reputation building is one important strategy in meeting stakeholder demands, especially in promoting Islamic educational institutions. Modern society tends to engage with organizations with a good reputation (Alzaareer & Abdalla, 2023). Therefore, creating a positive impression in the eyes of the public becomes one of the crucial aspects of building a superior reputation for Islamic educational institutions, and this positive impression can be developed through effective promotional strategies.

In the era of globalization, promotional strategies have transcended traditional product boundaries and spread to various service sectors. As part of a non-profit entity, the education industry, especially Islamic education institutions, must make awareness of promotional values an important prerequisite to building a strong and sustainable market share (Ichsan et al., 2023). In an ever-changing global context, Islamic education institutions face significant challenges that make promotion a strategic issue that requires special attention. Amidst the current global impact, these institutions must recognize the vital role of promotion in creating market differentiation, developing special meaning, and effectively communicating its advantages and strengths amidst competitive dynamics (Rahman, 2022).

In the face of increasing competition in the Islamic education industry, promotion has become necessary. This phenomenon is manifested through the rapid growth of various Islamic education institutions that continue to strive to highlight their respective advantages. As education service providers, these institutions must continuously learn and take initiatives to improve customer satisfaction, which students (Sateemae et al., 2022). Education is a continuous process, so educational service promotion strategies are crucial to winning the competition among educational institutions. More than just winning the competition, this promotional strategy also catalyzes and accelerates improving the overall management quality of Islamic education institutions.

Competition in the education sector is inevitable; many educational institutions have experienced declining student numbers, and some have even been forced to merge recently (Beemsterboer, 2022; Trigiyatno & Sutrisno, 2022). The ability of managers to understand the concept of education promotion is an essential prerequisite for maintaining and increasing the institution's growth. In engaging in educational promotion analysis, a crucial component is the subject of discussion, namely the concept of market demand (Kosim et al., 2023). Market demand, as a place of transaction, includes various commodities produced by producers to fulfill consumers' needs, wants, and expectations. The promotion itself is defined as a transactional process that aims to increase the expectations, desires, and needs of potential consumers so that they are interested in obtaining the products offered through payment by the agreement that has been made (Hastasari et al., 2022; Kultsum et al., 2022).

On the other hand, education is seen as a transformation of human mindset, appreciation, and habituation towards realizing a better human being. Although "school" is often directly identified with education, education encompasses a broader vehicle for transforming human civilization (Selim & Abdalla, 2022). Therefore, the discussion on education promotion should not be limited to school promotion alone. The paradigm of education, which has such a universal scope, cannot be limited to the context of the school system alone.

Al-Fityan School Medan in Medan is an educational entity present in the community with the main

purpose of being an Islamic da'wah institution committed to continuing to spread the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW through education. The vision carried by this institution is to build a generation of faith that masters science and can face the challenges of the times. The mission is to prepare a good and integrated educational environment for students through superior educational management and educator competence by educational quality standards to realize the mission of human development. History of Al-Fityan School Medan, established on 03 November 2007. Al-Fityan School Medan stands on an area of 11,600 m2 with eight buildings and existing facilities. In 2007, it started with the elementary and junior high school units and then the RA unit the following year. From the number of employees, around 30 people, then developed with the latest data in 2018, the number of employees is around 201 people, and the number of students is 1,075 from RA, SD, SMP, SMA, and Mahad Tahfiz units.

Researchers have explored various sources related to promotion management in private Islamic educational institutions, and several related studies include the following information. One is research by Hastasari et al. (2022), which reviews and explains the level of promotional acceptance and the promotion techniques and practices the Board of Further Education applies. The main focus of this study was to identify the extent of promotion acceptance levels achieved by education executives in Islamic schools and what promotion techniques they use. Another objective was to assess whether promotion acceptance and practices varied based on diverse institutional characteristics, such as enrolment size, regional location, and urbanity. Responses were obtained from twenty-four of the fifty-seven institutions in the population used for data analysis.

Another relevant study in the domain of promotion management of private Islamic educational institutions is an article by Indrioko (2023), which aims to explore the characteristics of higher education promotion and the role of universities in a global context. The study results show that the potential benefits of applying promotional theories and concepts that have proven effective in business are slowly being recognized by researchers in higher education promotion. The findings reflect a transition in understanding and application of promotional strategies that can be adopted by higher education institutions, including private Islamic education institutions, in facing the challenges of competition in an increasingly competitive global market.

Another research that deserves attention in the context of promotion management in private Islamic educational institutions is Lafrarchi's article (2020), which focuses on the competitive context of three types of schools in Australia, namely Public, Catholic, and Private, with an emphasis on the less favorable evaluation of Public Schools when compared to its other two competitors. The research sought to uncover the identity of the brand image or associations developed and parents' attitudes towards the three types of schools. The research findings highlighted the differences in the brand image of the three schools: Public schools are associated with cheap characteristics and are chosen based on affordability and proximity between school and residence. Catholic schools are closely associated with high religious values. Meanwhile, Private Schools are associated with a luxury image, being the most expensive brand, having a good academic reputation, and always presenting the latest information. These findings provide valuable insights into how brand image plays an important role in parents' perceptions of schools, information that can serve as a foundation for private Islamic education institutions to develop effective promotional strategies.

After examining some of the research findings outlined previously, the researcher observed that more than one study focused on exploring the concept of competitiveness-focused promotion management in private Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, as a continuation of the existing knowledge framework, this research aims to examine these aspects further. Through a comprehensive approach, the researcher seeks to present an in-depth analysis of competitive promotion management in the context of private Islamic educational institutions. By detailing the previous findings, this research seeks to contribute more in-depth, creative, and theoretical thinking related to promotional strategies that can be applied to improve the competitiveness of private Islamic educational institutions.

In the context of competitiveness, Islamic education institutions, especially private ones, are becoming increasingly important. Therefore, this research will discuss Competitive Promotion Management in Private Islamic Education Institutions. The aim is to explore the concept of promotion management implemented by Al-Fityan School Medan, with the hope of providing solutions and innovations that are beneficial to the growth and development of education in Indonesia as a whole.

2. METHODS

This research adopts an interpretive paradigm through a qualitative approach focusing on case studies, aiming to explore in-depth understanding and search for truth. The researcher serves as the main instrument and data collector at the research site, Al-Fityan School Medan. The research data was obtained through several methods, including interviews, observation, and documentation. The data sources involved various parties, such as the principal, specific educational institution units, students, alumni, and guardians. In addition, information can also be obtained from the head of the foundation and other elements related to the scope of the research. The data analysis involved three critical steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification (Miles et al., 2014). Data validity was checked through triangulation of sources, methods, and theories and through evaluation of the veracity of information, discussion, extension of research time, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of research related to promotional management at Al-Fityan School Medan reveal several promotional concepts with excellent programs as follows:

Main Flagship Programme

The first flagship program, the ONS (One Night Stay) activity, is attended by class IX SMPIT Al-Fityan Medan students on Friday-Saturday. The program begins with the afternoon Al-Ma'tsurat reading activity, Maghrib prayer in congregation, and recitation of the Qur'an in halaqah, as many as 3 sheets for each student. After that, the activity continued with dinner together, 'Isha prayer in congregation, and recitation of the Qur'an again as many as four sheets of each student in halaqah. The activity continued with the delivery of tausyiah. Furthermore, at 03.30, WIB ONS participants were awakened to be directed to carry out qiyamul lail in the congregation and continued with the Fajr prayer in the congregation, after which ONS participants read al-Ma'tsurat in the morning, then ONS participants did Futsal and Badminton sports in the Floor Hall and field, then ONS participants were asked to get ready to go home to their respective homes.

Second, the ISC (Islamic Study Club) program, held once every three months, aims to increase female students' understanding of religious knowledge, improve morals, increase faith, and strengthen ukhuwah. These activities have different themes, such as Birrul Walidain (Filial piety to both parents). The Birrul Walidain theme has a high position and is among the highest-ranking practices. Birrul validation is a religious teaching for children always to do good to their parents not to say words that can hurt them, even if they are just "ah," let alone rebuke them (Andriyandi et al., 2020).

The next interesting program is the "Parents Teaching Programme," an activity that invites parents of students to motivate them to become successful people in this world and the hereafter, as well as a means of introducing professions to students. For example, Dr Hatta Ridho, S.Sos., MSP, the father of a student named M. Aqilla Daffariz, was invited. In his delivery, he delivered material on national insight. Among them is the theory of sovereignty, the trias politica, namely the legislature, executive and judiciary, then democracy. Moreover, it motivated the students to love the nation and state of Indonesia by using domestic products following existing regulations. The speaker emphasized that youth are the

nation's hope and can change Indonesia. In addition to appreciation for the teachers, Al-Fityan School Medan rewards teachers with good performance every month. Hopefully, this activity will motivate teachers to assist students better and provide learning.

This concept summarises a practice directly integrated into Al-Fityan School Medan's policies. Not all flagship programs are presented because each level of education has its flagship. Within this framework, each school principal under the Al-Fityan School Medan Foundation is involved in the promotion process led by each school principal. The main focus of this policy is seen at the New Learner Admission (PSB) stage, where the school principals form a deliberation group to conceptualize and design the PSB process at Al-Fityan School Medan. The approach adopted reflects the precision in achieving the vision and mission of Al-Fityan School Medan by putting forward a key program aimed at achieving learning completeness for all groups of students and ensuring equal learning rights for all lines in the school environment.

The preparation process of promotion management at Al-Fityan School Medan is well underway under the guidance of the principal. As a leader, the principal's role is to provide effective direction, especially in formulating the concept of competitive promotion management. The principal faces various situations where decision-making mistakes can result in significant impacts. Therefore, the principal of Al-Fityan School Medan deliberated on developing the concept of promotional management through a flagship program that could increase the competitiveness of the Islamic education institution. In applying the deliberative decision-making method, various factors play an important role, including general information about the challenges faced, education level, personality, adaptation process, and cultural values that form the basis for formulating strategic measures. This approach reflects the principal's efforts to ensure that every decision made through the deliberation process includes an in-depth understanding of the various factors that can influence the success of promotion management at Al-Fityan School Medan.

The role of leadership in decision-making through deliberative mechanisms includes a series of steps consisting of analyzing uncertain or risky situations, identifying the problem at hand, formulating alternative courses of action that might be taken, evaluating each available option, and obtaining and using data through systematic questioning (Saada, 2020; Suyadi et al., 2020). In this process, leadership stands out by prioritizing rational and creative approaches to challenges. Selection among various alternative courses of action is done by deeply investigating the nature of the problem, identifying possible solutions, setting priorities, and ultimately, taking the action deemed most appropriate to address the problem (Rahmat & Yahya, 2022).

Based on the results of field research and the theoretical basis previously described, it can be obtained that promotional or branding strategies play an important role in the context of educational institutions. This strategy is crucial for shaping a distinctive identity and creating a unique and specific image for the educational institution, which differs from other educational institutions (Kultsum et al., 2022; Selim & Abdalla, 2022). In this context, the general objective is to introduce and build the "brand" of Al-Fityan School Medan by presenting the values, characteristics, and advantages that distinguish it positively in the eyes of the community. Thus, promotion and branding are not just marketing efforts but also strategic steps to build a positive image and support the growth and development of Islamic educational institutions such as Al-Fityan School Medan.

Regardless of the excellence and quality of an educational institution, its success in reaching the wider community often depends on the quality of the promotional management implemented (Hastasari et al., 2022). Without an effective promotion strategy, although the institution has many advantages, information about its achievements will not reach the general public optimally. Therefore, to improve the visibility and reputation of Al-Fityan School Medan, the proposed idea is to follow the guidance of Islamic Institutions through a deliberative approach. Thus, this educational institution emphasizes the importance of having a deliberative forum to formulate creative and effective

promotional strategies to advance the educational institution. This step reflects Al-Fityan School Medan's commitment to ensuring that information about its competitive advantage is widely disseminated in the community.

The Idea of Strong Determination in Performing Worship

Al-Fityan School Medan designed various programs and systems to give students a wide choice according to their faculties or individual preferences. This creates a variety of paths that students can take according to their interests and goals, and one of them is a program that emphasizes the love and observance of worship. The main concept is that Al-Fityan School Medan does its utmost to guide and develop its students, with the aspiration that alumni from Al-Fityan School Medan will be able to benefit society. At the very least, they are expected to become prayer leaders in their respective neighborhoods and actively participate in community religious activities, such as yasinan events and other activities. Some may even have the courage to preach, master the art of speaking and lecturing, become Master of Ceremony (MC), and involve themselves in various other positive roles.

In addition to presenting the various excellent programs described earlier, Al-Fityan School Medan also emphasizes the importance of establishing a good relationship with the surrounding environment by implementing the Community Development program. Through this activity, children from the surrounding area of Al-Fityan School Medan can come, learn, and participate in various activities organized by this institution. The main objective of this program is to establish a harmonious and mutually beneficial relationship between Al-Fityan School Medan and the surrounding community. This approach shows that this educational institution does not only focus on providing academic programs but also puts forward a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment that allows learners to develop their potential actively (Mulianingsih et al., 2022; Sulistianingsih et al., 2022). Education at Al-Fityan School Medan aims to shape the dimensions of religion and spirituality, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and essential skills for advancing self, society, and the state. This approach is in line with the principles contained in Law Article 20 of 2003, which outlines that education should be a directed effort to facilitate the comprehensive development of students, including religious, moral, intellectual, and practical skills needed in the context of society, nation, and state (Hanafi et al., 2020; Wahyudi & Alanshori, 2023).

Based on the previous explanation, institutional promotion management aims to optimally develop and expose to all stakeholders the potential of religious and spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, and morals owned by the institution. This effort is directed at providing satisfaction to all parties involved in the educational process and ensuring that the positive values instilled by the institution can be maximally perceived. Thus, institutional promotion management focuses not only on academic aspects but also on forming learners' spiritual, moral, and social dimensions. This approach aligns with the principles of educational effectiveness that aim to achieve success in all aspects of individual development, ensure stakeholder satisfaction, and enhance the institution's positive image in the eyes of society.

The Idea of Global Language Acquisition

Al-Fityan School Medan has formulated various programs that involve collaboration with various parties related to the development of language programs. This cooperation aims to achieve the main goal known as Learning with Native Speakers. One of the flagship programs in the language domain is to bring foreigners directly to Al-Fityan School Medan and conduct extracurricular activities that focus on developing English courses. This program not only involves internal tutors from Al-Fityan School Medan but also involves students who are undergoing Field Work Practice (PPL) from other institutions. This creates a dynamic and collaborative learning environment where tutors and students from different backgrounds can contribute to each other and enrich the English learning experience at Al-Fityan School Medan.

Meanwhile, Arabic learning is conducted directly by the teachers. In this event, students are expected to actively participate and try out their reading, writing, and speaking skills with guidance from internal or external teachers. As a universal means of communication, language becomes an essential element for every individual, and every society has its language that allows them to convey their intentions and goals. Therefore, interaction between individuals cannot occur without understanding the language used by the other party. The diversity of languages in this world is considered one of the signs of Allah's majesty, as explained in the Qur'an.

"And among the signs of His power are the creation of the heavens and the earth, the difference in your languages, and the color of your skin. Surely therein are signs for those who know" (Ar-Rum [30]: 22).

Foreign language learning serves various purposes, including fulfilling requirements for financial aid or meeting certain criteria in the world of work (Lafrarchi, 2020). For some, foreign language learning can be a means to broaden horizons and increase opportunities in the world of work (Lafrarchi, 2020). It is important to note that some people may not realize that the Prophet Muhammad ordered his followers to engage in foreign language learning activities (Rissanen, 2020).

From the previous description, the main purpose of learning and mastering a foreign language is to enable individuals to communicate effectively without misunderstandings. Proficiency in a foreign language also makes it easier for individuals to receive and understand knowledge and opens their minds to a wider range of concepts and ideas. Thus, foreign language acquisition is practical in communication, provides easier and more comprehensive access to knowledge, and expands an individual's worldview.

Ideas About Enhancing Skills

Al-Fityan School Medan, an educational institution committed to improving competence, especially in science and technology, presents various registration pathways for prospective students with different segmentations. Firstly, the Regular Pathway allows students to choose school programs and activities according to their interests and desires. Secondly, there is the Tahfidz Pathway, an educational model where students have the responsibility and target of Tahfidz Al-Qur'an every semester. Meanwhile, the Duafa Pathway is an option that provides relief, especially in terms of fees, for families who have a passion for learning but are financially limited or for orphans. In addition, Al-Fityan School Medan also provides opportunities for students with special needs through special enrollment pathways. This demonstrates Al-Fityan School Medan's commitment to providing inclusive and diverse access to education to create a learning environment that supports the development of every individual.

Implementing a promotional strategy is focused on increasing the institution's profitability and creating satisfaction for consumers as a form of responsibility to stakeholders regarding the quality of each product produced (Demirel Ucan & Wright, 2019). Before implementing a promotional strategy, it is important to improve the basics, including building a positive image (image building), paying attention to the core services' quality, and carefully segmenting and targeting the market. This approach aligns with the research results by Miskiah et al. (2019). Thus, implementing promotional strategies is an effort to improve financial performance and an integral part of the institution's commitment to providing quality services and paying attention to customer satisfaction.

The results of this study reveal some important findings related to promotion management in private Islamic education institutions. The first study by Hastasari et al. (2022) identified the level of promotion acceptance and techniques used by education executives in Islamic schools and sought variations based on institutional characteristics. In the second study by Indrioko (2023), it was found that effective promotion in business is beginning to be applied in the context of higher education, including private Islamic education institutions, to face increasingly fierce global competition. The third study by Lafrarchi (2020) uncovered differences in the brand image between public, Catholic, and

private schools in Australia and how this brand image affects parents' perceptions of schools. The findings provide valuable insights for developing effective promotional strategies for private Islamic education institutions, including understanding and utilizing brand image to meet stakeholder needs.

Based on the results of the above research, a key principle in improving competence is the ability to sort out and identify between aspects that need to be maintained and those that need to be developed. After identifying the key elements that require development, the first step is to build a strong foundation for creating optimal quality. This confirms that competency improvement efforts require a careful and targeted approach, focusing on identifying key elements crucial in improving overall quality.

4.   CONCLUSION

Promotion management at Al-Fityan School Medan carries several main concepts. First is the concept of excellent programs, including ONS (One Night Stay) activities, ISC (Islamic Study Club) programs, and parent teaching programs. Secondly, the idea of strong determination in carrying out worship, where Al-Fityan School Medan strives to maximize religious potential, spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, and noble character to satisfy stakeholders. Third, the idea of mastering global languages, which has the main goal of mastering foreign languages to facilitate understanding of science and broaden horizons. Fourth, the idea of improving skills, where Al-Fityan School Medan opens three registration paths for new students, namely regular, tahfidz, and dhuafa', to improve student competence in science and technology.

Al-Fityan School Medan's promotion management concept has several important implications. Flagship programs such as ONS, ISC, and parent teaching programs can improve the quality of student education. At the same time, the focus on devotion, personality development, and global language acquisition helps shape individuals who are ethical, religiously strong, and globally minded. In addition, this approach is expected to satisfy stakeholders, including students, parents, and the community, thus supporting the long-term growth and development of Al-Fityan School Medan. Continuous evaluation is necessary to ensure effective implementation and continuous improvement.

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