Transformation Of Higher Education Marketing Strategy In The Digital Era: Implementation Model at Syekh Abdul Halim Hasan Institute, Binjai City

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the marketing strategies implemented by the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai to improve power competition in the high education sector. This research aims at the application of mixed 4P marketing. Specifically, this study describes 1) the products produced by the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai in improving power competitiveness of higher education, 2) prices offered by the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai in improving power competitiveness of higher education, 3) places provided by the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai in improving power higher education competitiveness, and 4) promotion strategies developed by the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai in improving power higher education competitiveness. With an analysis of how universities develop their academic programs, establish tuition fees, optimize location strategically, and use promotional strategies, this study attempts to uncover the effectiveness of strategy in attracting candidate students and improving power competition. This study uses a qualitative approach, with data collected through structured interviews, observation, and analysis. Documents. Respondents covering stakeholders' interests include the chairman of the foundation, leadership college high, lecturers, staff education, and students. Data collection and sampling methods snowball used to obtain comprehensive data. Data analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, namely data condensation, data presentation, and retrieval conclusion. Triangulation technique applied to validate data and ensure reliability. Findings from the study show that aligning academic programs with market demand, maintaining competitive and affordable tuition fees, choosing strategic campus locations, and integrating traditional and digital promotional strategies significantly contribute to improving the power competitiveness/superiority of the competitive Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai. Next, in the adaptation curriculum, collaboration and improvement facilities are very important in maintaining relevance and pulling candidate students. Based on the findings, the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai recommended continuing to increase the curriculum and align it with market and industrial world needs that continue to grow and develop. In addition, it is necessary to further integrate digital marketing strategies to expand reach and maintain power in the increasingly competitive education sector.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Competitiveness, Higher Education

A. INTRODUCTION

Competition in the education sector is all the more intense in some years. Globalization, progress in technology, shifts in the economy, and increasing amounts of college height are the main factors tightening competition between institutions of higher education. Data shows that Indonesia has 4,739 universities, with North Sumatra being one of the regions with tight competition in this sector. The height amount of institution education creates pressure on colleges to pull candidate students with effective and innovative marketing strategies.

Competitiveness education tall covers the ability of institutions to attract students, support research, as well as produce graduates of quality. Reputation, curriculum relevance, and collaboration with industry become important elements in building Power competitive. In addition, the college tall demanded to continue adapting to changing trends and expectations of candidate students, such as flexibility in learning and prospects for careers.

However, not all colleges are capable of surviving in this competition. In North Sumatra, for example, the number of college-educated people declined from 221 in 2021 to 214 in 2022. This condition shows that institutions that are not competitive tend to be eliminated. Challenge main, including limitations on source power, quality education, and innovation in learning, especially in the midst of rapid development, changing technology, and market needs.

College Islamic higher education institutions (PTKI), such as STAI Al-Ishlahiyah Binjai, have challenges in addition because they must integrate religious and general education. Although thus, STAI Al-Ishlahiyah has shown good power competition, proven with a high number of new students every year. In three years, lastly, the institution accepted 2,643 new students, reflecting the success of its marketing strategy.

Table 1. Data on Students of Al-Ishlahiyah Binjai Islamic College of Islamic Studies

No	Year	Registrant	Accepted / Passed
1	2021	940	915
2	2022	918	896
3	2023	872	832
Amount		2730	2643

One of the effective approaches in marketing education is the frame mix 4P marketing (Product, Price, Place, Promotion). This approach provides structure in planning and implementing marketing strategies to attract candidate students. In the context of education, elements such as academic programs, fees, education, location, institutions, and promotion through digital media play an important role.

Various studies show that the implementation of marketing strategies, including adaptation technology and market segmentation, can increase Power competition in colleges. Colleges that are highly agile in responding to students needs, offering experience-based education holistically, and utilizing digital tools have a greater chance of attracting students in the face of increasingly fierce competition.

This study aims to explore the marketing strategies implemented by STAI Al-Ishlahiyah Binjai in increasing power competition. This study provides insight into how colleges can utilize strategic marketing to build their reputation, attract students, and compete in the competitive educational landscape. This research is expected to contribute to the literature on marketing education, especially in the context of higher education in Islam in Indonesia, as well as give practical guidance for other institutions to improve their power competition through effective marketing strategies.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing Strategy

Marketing strategy is a concept the basis of which involves the processes of analysis, planning, implementation, and control activity marketing to achieve organizational goals. This strategy aims to create value for customers at a time of reaching competitive superiority (Kotler & Lee, 2007). In the context of education, marketing strategy covers target market identification, understanding the needs of consumers, and manufacturing effective plans to promote and attract interest from candidate students (Varadarajan, 2010).

Marketing strategy development for educational institutions involves comprehensive market analysis, including trend demographics, analysis of competitors, and strengths and weaknesses of institutions through SWOT analysis (Kotler & Armstrong, 2017). This strategy includes various elements that help institutions distinguish themselves from competitors, such as superior academics, campus facilities, and special programs.

Success of marketing strategy education is measured based on the achievement of goals, such as improvement in registration amounts and reinforcement of reputation in institutions. Digital marketing plays an important role in reaching audiences through social media, email marketing, and official websites. Promotion traditional such as open houses and regular campus tours is relevant, especially to strengthen relations with the local community (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2016).

Marketing College

Marketing education tall uses an approach that mixes 4P marketing, which includes Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. Product refers to academic programs, vocational training, and services support offered by the institution, which must be innovative and relevant to student needs as well as labor market demands (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011).

Price in context college tall covers tuition fees and scholarships. Pricing strategies must notice perceived value by the candidate students and abilities paying target market (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2008). Place, which involves location, physique, and digital platforms, must be strategic to reach students. Meanwhile, the promotion focuses on communication to mark unique institutions through digital and traditional media, such as social media, online advertising, and brochures (Belch & Belch, 2018).

In further development, the 7P approach—which includes Process, Physical Evidence, and People—expands the focus of marketing strategy. This element helps institutions give experience, comprehensively improving education power to compete in an increasingly competitive market (Hemsley-Brown & Goonawardana, 2007).

Power College Competition

Competitiveness in colleges refers to the ability of institutions to attract students, secure research funding, and produce graduates of high quality. The main factors influencing power competition are covering reputation institutions, innovation curriculum, results research, and partnerships with industry (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Globalization and technology are the main driving forces influencing power competition. College tall must offer flexible, affordable, and relevant educational programs with global market needs to attract students locally and also internationally (Grosseck et al., 2020). In addition, institutions need to strengthen collaboration with partner industries and improve quality research to build global reputation.

However, the challenges, like limitations on source power, development faculty, and shifts in student expectations, can influence power competition institutions. To survive, colleges must

be agile in dealing with changing trends, such as online learning and improvement needs; they will need flexibility in academic programs (Permadi, 2022).

C. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore marketing strategies at INSAN Binjai, located in Binjai City. It is descriptive and naturalistic, focusing on phenomena as they occur in the field without generalizing to other objects. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Observation was conducted to directly examine marketing activities and the environment at INSAN Binjai. Structured interviews were held with key informants, such as the Chairman of the Foundation, the Chairman of STAI, and lecturers, using snowball sampling to expand information. Documentation study included analyzing institutional marketing policies, student numbers, and marketing activity reports.

Data analysis followed the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which involves data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation organizes information into meaningful units, and data presentation uses systematic textual descriptions to identify patterns. Conclusions were drawn through triangulation from various sources to ensure credibility and validity.

Respondents for the study included the Chairman of the Foundation, the Chairman of STAI, the Deputy Chairman for Cooperation, Department Chairs, lecturers, and students, selected based on their roles and contributions to marketing activities, providing deep insights into the marketing strategy and competitive strength of the institution.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Products Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai

The People Of Binjai offer products mainly in the form of a study program that includes three faculties and six study programs for bachelor's degrees, which are adjusted with market needs. This program is designed to prepare students with skills relevant in the world of work, as reflected in the implementation of the Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) curriculum. This program provides student internship opportunities in various agencies, like government offices and educational institutions.

Student satisfaction with product academic and facilities support provided by INSAN, including the microteaching laboratory and library with a collection of adequate books. This

shows INSAN's focus on improving quality education. Facilities additions, like lecture halls and equipment, support learning; others are also adequate to support the academic process.

INSAN also develops collaboration with various partners to expand opportunities for students, including internships in the sector industry and services community. These programs aim to improve competence and make graduates relevant to a dynamic job market. In addition, the INSAN curriculum has been redesigned to meet national accreditation standards.

Document planning strategically shows focus on improving quality service for students, improving facilities, and developing adaptive curricula. INSAN's efforts to develop services based on student needs cover support for academic and development programs and skills addition.

Institute Price Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai

Determination prices at INSAN are based on three main aspects: cost operational, accessibility, and power competitive. The Single Tuition Fee (UKT) System of Rp 2,100,000 for regular class and Rp 3,100,000 for employee class allows students from various backgrounds to access education. INSAN also provides option payment installments to increase accessibility.

INSAN considers the economic background of candidate students in determining the cost of education. This strategy aims to maintain a balance between affordability and quality education. Support from This policy reflects INSAN's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. Students give a positive response about the cost of education, stating that the price offered is comparable with the quality of learning and facilities received. INSAN also provides scholarships for students overachieving and underachieving, able to add Power pull to this institution. Policy price competitive allows INSAN to compete with colleges that are also high in the Binjai area. This approach is an advantage in attracting students from the area around who are looking for education quality with a price that is affordable.

Institute Place Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai

INSAN's location is in the middle of Binjai City, offering good accessibility via transportation in general, making it strategic for students from various areas. Nearby locations with central cities and facilities generally give additional comfort for students and staff.

Convenient transportation to INSAN is possible for students from areas like Langkat and Deli Serdang to access the campus easily. The environment around the campus is also assessed as conducive to supportive teaching and learning activities and student welfare. Facilities

around campus, such as shopping and dining centers, provide comfort and additional enrichment for students, enhancing their educational experience. This environment is also a key factor to consider for candidate students in choosing INSAN. INSAN's strategy in choosing location reflects a focus on comfort and ease of access. This location not only enhances Power Pull INSAN as an institution of education but also provides a positive impact on student retention.

Promotion Strategy Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai

INSAN uses a combination of traditional and digital promotions to attract new students. Social media like Instagram and Facebook are used to reach a wider audience, while traditional promotion like distributing brochures and visits to schools is still done.

INSAN's promotional strategy involves students in campaign marketing. Students act as campus ambassadors, sharing experiences they had with candidate students. This approach improves trust in candidate students against PEOPLE. Promotion also focuses on image as college tall with cost affordability and quality. This is supported by consistent information on INSAN's official website and social media. This combination of strategies ensures that INSAN remains relevant in the highly competitive education market. INSAN also adjusts message promotion with target markets, including students, school children, and workers. This personalized approach helps INSAN reach various segment candidate students more effectively.

Product

INSAN products are study programs designed to meet labor market needs and support the view that colleges must be responsive to market trends (Bugandwa Mungu Akonkwa, 2009). This approach ensures graduates have their own relevant skills, improving power pull institutions (Junevicius et al., 2021).

Collaboration with partner industries and other institutions are INSAN's advantages in improving competent students. This is in accordance with the view of Waham et al. (2023) that collaboration expands opportunities for students and creates graduates who are ready to work. INSAN also adopts a curriculum adaptive to respond to the need for technology and the modern world of work, in line with the view of Maghsudi et al. (2021). Curriculum adaptation allows institutions to remain relevant in the landscape of continuing education that has changed.

Service comprehensive students become important elements in INSAN strategy. The findings of Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka (2010) show that service good students improve satisfaction and retention of students. Competence graduates become INSAN's focus to retain

power competitively. This is supported by Davies' study (2017), which emphasizes the importance of education based on competence in producing competitive graduates.

With an approach to market and service-based students, capable people create products that are relevant and interesting to potential customer students, according to global trends in education (Abelha et al., 2020).

Price

Determination strategy INSAN prices reflect a balance between cost operational and accessibility, supporting the theory of price elasticity in education being high (Prakhov & Bugakova, 2023). This strategy allows students from various backgrounds to access education quality.

Policy price competitiveness becomes a factor in the main thing that improves Power INSAN competitiveness. Liu et al.'s (2024) research emphasizes that competitive prices influence students' decisions in choosing colleges highly. Flexible payments, like installments and scholarships, show INSAN's commitment to inclusivity. This supports findings of Raheja & Hajela (2021), which stated that flexible payment increases accessibility to education.

Price is also used as a tool for building INSAN's reputation as an institution that provides education quality with affordable costs (Fu, 2014). This approach is important to attract new students, especially from lower middle circles of the economy. Adjusting prices based on market conditions helps INSAN maintain its position in the middle of the competition. This is in line with the view that the strategy of determining price dynamics increases power competition institutions (Frey et al., 2022).

With an inclusive and competitive pricing strategy, INSAN is able to expand access to education and at once improve power competition in the education market.

Place

strategic location in the center of Binjai City reflects the importance of accessibility in drawing students. Research by Brownie et al. (2023) shows that convenient transportation increases Powerful institutions. Facilities Supporter, like center shopping and transportation, generally add value for students, according to the findings of Widaningrum & Andika (2020). Existence: This facility creates a more holistic learning experience.

The environment around INSAN supports academic activity. The findings of Closs et al. (2022) show that supportive learning environments increase concentration in students and productivity. Environment: A safe and comfortable environment is also a factor

important in building identity institutions. This supports Xu et al.'s (2022) findings on the importance of environment in creating a productive learning atmosphere.

Placement of INSAN at the location strategically shows understanding in depth about the impact geographically on accessibility and reputation institutions. This is in line with Henderson's (2020) view on the importance of location in successful institutions. Strategic location allowing INSAN to attract more students from various areas, at the same time increasing connectedness of the institution with the local community.

Promotion Strategy

INSAN integrates traditional and digital promotion to reach a wider target audience, according to the findings of Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka (2016), which stated that this combination of strategies is effective in marketing education highly. Promotion is traditionally done through brochures and visits to schools, while social media like Instagram and Facebook are used to expand range promotion.

Student participation as campus ambassadors is an effective strategy in building a positive institutional image. This is in accordance with Raheja & Hajela's study (2021), which found that testimonials from students can increase trust in candidate students in institutions. This strategy creates an emotional connection between students and prospective students.

INSAN also builds a strong brand identity with highlighted superiority, cost affordability, and quality education. According to research by Cheung et al. (2010), identity-consistent brands increase Power Pull College high, especially in the local market. This approach allows INSAN to compete with institutions similar in the surrounding area.

INSAN's promotional strategies include adaptation message promotion based on market segment. For students, school medium focus promotion lies in the academic program excellence and campus facilities. As for workers, INSAN emphasizes flexible timetable lectures. This approach supports findings by Bugandwa Mungu Akonkwa (2009) on the importance of segmentation in marketing education as well.

Digital promotions are also used to increase the visibility of INSAN online. This is relevant to research by Nair et al. (2023), which states that digital marketing expands the range of audiences and creates involvement with candidate students. Interesting content on INSAN social media has helped increase brand awareness among young generations.

By combining traditional and digital strategies, INSAN is able to increase efficiency and effectiveness in marketing. This strategy not only increases power pull for candidate students but also strengthens the relationship between institutions and local communities, appropriate with trend marketing education, adaptive and market-oriented height (Abelha et al., 2020).

E. CONCLUSION

This study identified four main strategies implemented by the Institute Sheikh Abdul Halim Hasan Binjai (INSAN) to improve power competition: development of products based on market needs, determination of competitive and affordable prices, selection of strategic locations with high accessibility, and promotion that integrates traditional and digital approaches. INSAN products include adaptive study programs and holistic student services. Policy price focuses on inclusivity and power competition, while campus location offers convenient transportation and a conducive environment. Promotion strategy combining digital media, traditional marketing, and student involvement as campus ambassadors.

This research has limitations on coverage of a subject that focuses only on one thing: institutional education. So that generalization to other institutions may not be fully relevant. In addition, the qualitative approach and interview methods are limited to the internal perspective of INSAN, without covering views from external sources like candidate students or industry partners. This can limit understanding of the effectiveness of INSAN's marketing strategy in the context of competition education, wider height.

Study advanced; it is recommended to involve other institutions as comparisons and use them to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing strategies in various contexts in education. In addition, the approach mixed qualitative and quantitative data that includes perceptions of candidate students, alumni, and external partners, which can give more comprehensive insights. Future research can also explore the long-term impact of digital marketing strategies on power competition in institutional education in the era of globalization and digitalization.

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