

Social Media Based Marketing Strategy to Build a Positive Image

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Abstract: This research aims to describe and analyze the social media-based marketing strategies implemented by MTS Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan in building a positive image of the institution amidst the increasingly competitive educational institution rivalry. In the digital era, social media has become a strategic means of conveying information, fostering communication, and strengthening the branding of Islamic education. This research employs a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving social media managers, school principals, and related stakeholders. The results indicate that utilizing platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp with educational content, promotional activities of the school, as well as testimonials from students and alumni. This strategy is effective in increasing the visibility of schools and shaping a positive perception of the quality of education and Islamic values in the community. This study fills a gap in the literature by examining how Islamic values are integrated into social media marketing for madrassas, a topic that has been less explored in existing research. The findings emphasize that social media marketing can be an important instrument in building a positive image of schools if implemented consistently, communicatively, and in accordance with the characteristics of the audience.

Keywords: Islamic Education Branding, Marketing Strategy, Social Media, Positive Image

A. Introduction

In the era of evolving digital transformation, social media has become one of the highly effective strategic instruments in the world of marketing, including in the education sector (Umi Kalsum, 2023). The drastic changes in the communication landscape marked by the advancement of digital technology have pushed educational institutions to shift from conventional promotional methods, such as brochures, billboards, and direct visits, towards a more dynamic and interactive digital approach (Lailiyah, 2023). Especially for the younger generation who are very familiar with the virtual world, social media has become the main medium for seeking information and shaping perceptions (Topan Iskandar, 2023).

Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp offer great opportunities for educational institutions to build a positive image through informative, engaging, and real-time content (Daroen & Nopita, 2024). Through the visualization of flagship programs, the learning atmosphere, and testimonials from students and alumni, institutions can strengthen their relationship with the community and enhance public trust in the quality of education offered (Davis & Litsey, 2024).

More than just a promotional tool, social media also serves as a two-way communication medium between educational institutions and stakeholders, including prospective students, parents, alumni, and institutional partners (Nurhidayah, 2022). This indicates that the success of digital communication strategies is largely determined by the extent to which institutions can manage social media professionally and sustainably (Suhag & Rauniyar, 2023). A number of previous studies have shown that social media is effective in building brand image, increasing public participation, and strengthening engagement with the community (Udayana, 2024).

In this context, Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTS) Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan, as an Islamic educational institution located in an urban area, faces its own challenges in increasing competitiveness and attracting new students. Marketing strategies have become crucial, not only as a promotional tool but also as a means to shape institutional identity and instill a positive image in the public's mind. The utilization of social media has become a strategic solution to communicate Islamic values, academic excellence, and the unique school culture.

Nevertheless, studies that specifically explore social media marketing strategies in Islamic educational institutions are still very limited. Most of the previous research is (Khanna & Jacob, 2024) Only focusing on the technical aspects of social media use or on public educational institutions. The gap in this research lies in the lack of in-depth studies on how educational, spiritual, and Islamic-themed social media content is strategically constructed to shape public perception of the character and quality of madrasas. In the context of madrasas, religious visual representation and spiritual narratives play an important role in building public trust and attracting the interest of prospective students.

This research presents novelty by highlighting the case study of MTS Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan as an example of a madrasa that is active and aware in designing and implementing social media-based marketing strategies. The uniqueness of this approach lies in the multidimensional analysis that not only assesses the effectiveness of social media as a promotional tool but also as a medium for forming a religious-modern image that aligns with the identity of urban Islamic institutions. This study explores the digital content produced, the forms of interaction with the audience, as well as public perceptions of the existence of MTS Al-Washliyah in the digital space.

Thus, this study not only expands the academic discourse on educational communication strategies in the digital era but also offers conceptual contributions in the form of a religious value-based marketing communication model that is relevant to be applied in other Islamic educational institutions. This research is expected to serve as a strategic reference for madrasahs in building their existence and public trust amidst the increasingly competitive dynamics of national education.

B. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study method to deeply examine the social media-based marketing strategy implemented by Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTS) Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan in building a positive institutional image. The choice of the case study method is based on the consideration that the digital communication strategy applied by this madrasah is a complex contextual phenomenon that needs to be understood holistically in a real environment (Creswell, 2020). This study aims to uncover the internal dynamics of digital strategies, the actors involved, and their impact on public perception of Islamic educational institutions.

The research subjects consist of school principals, social media management teams, teachers involved in digital promotion, students, and students' parents. Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques, with the criteria that they have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the process of communication and digital marketing of the madrasa (Sugiyono, 2022). Data collection was conducted through three main techniques, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. These techniques were used in an integrated manner to obtain rich, in-depth, and contextual data. Details of the data collection methods are presented in the table below:

Table 1. Summary of Data Collection Methods

Data Collection Techniques	Focus / Object	Example Questions / Observation Activities
Participatory Observation	Social media posting activities (Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp)	- Type of content posted- Posting frequency- Public response (likes, comments)
In-Depth Interview	Head of the school, social media team, teachers, students, parents	- How is the content strategy designed? - What is the main goal of using social media? - What is the perception of parents towards the digital content of the madrasa?
Documentation Study	Archive of uploads, testimonials, documentation of school activities	- Screenshot of promotional content- Engagement data- Activity posters, videos, and religious narratives in digital content

To ensure the validity and authenticity of the data, this research applies source triangulation and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is conducted by comparing the perspectives of various informants (school principals, students,

parents), while method triangulation is done by comparing the results of observations, interview data, and digital documentation.

The operationalization of triangulation in this research includes the following steps: Simultaneous recording of data from various sources, where each piece of information obtained from one method (interviews) is directly cross-checked with observations and documents. Double thematic coding, coding is carried out thematically from each technique, then aligned across methods to test the consistency of themes. Cross-reflection of preliminary results with informants, the researcher conducts member checking with several key informants to ensure that the interpretation of data does not deviate from its original meaning.

All collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis with an inductive approach. The analysis process began with repeatedly reading the interview transcripts and observation notes, then identifying emerging patterns such as content strategies, representations of religious values, and interactions with the digital audience. These themes were then mapped and presented in a descriptive narrative that reflects the reality of the digital marketing strategies implemented by the madrasah.

This approach provides researchers the freedom to capture the social complexities and dynamics of communication relations occurring in the digital space. As emphasized by (Moleong, 2000), Qualitative approaches are very appropriate for understanding the subjective meanings constructed by individuals within their social and cultural contexts. Thus, this study provides an in-depth understanding of how urban Islamic madrasahs build institutional images through value-based digital communication strategies.

C. Results and Discussion

The Application of Social Media-Based Marketing Strategy

The results of the observations conducted during the research indicate that MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan has actively and structurally implemented social media-based marketing strategies to support the institution's positive image. This digital marketing activity is particularly evident from the use of Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp as the main media for conveying information and building interactions with the public, especially parents of students, prospective learners, and the surrounding community. In terms of content, the school's official social media accounts routinely publish various school activities such as flag ceremonies, religious competitions, extracurricular activities, active learning, and moments of celebrating Islamic holidays. Each post is accompanied by a positive narrative that highlights religious values, discipline, and the character excellence of madrasah students. The use of communicative language and appealing visualizations through photos or videos further strengthens the appeal of the content shared.

Based on observations, the content that attracts the most public attention is student achievement posts, alumni testimonials, and short videos about innovative learning activities. This indicates that the community responds positively to the school's efforts in building a progressive yet religious identity. The school also utilizes WhatsApp Group to convey information directly to parents, which strengthens two-way communication. In terms of frequency, posts are made at least 2-3 times a week, indicating a consistent effort in building a digital presence. However, the management of social media accounts is still limited to an internal team of teachers who have limited skills in graphic design and digital marketing strategies. Nevertheless, the collaborative spirit and student involvement in content management become a unique strength for the school.

Observations also show that this strategy has had a positive impact on the community's perception. Some prospective parents of students admitted they are familiar with and interested in enrolling their children at MTs Al-Washliyah due to the positive impression gained from the school's social media. Overall, the social media-based marketing strategy implemented by MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan has shown early success in building a positive image, increasing public engagement, and expanding the reach of school information. This indicates that the madrasah is capable of adapting to the times without abandoning its Islamic identity, which is the institution's core value. In support of the observation findings, in-depth interviews were conducted with five informants who are directly or indirectly involved in digital marketing activities at MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan. The five informants consist of: the school principal, social media managing teacher, students, parents of students, and alumni. The results of these interviews strengthen the picture of the social media-based marketing strategy implemented by the school.

The result of the interview with the Principal (Mr. Z) stated that "*We realize the importance of social media as the face of the school in the current era. Therefore, we encourage teachers and students to actively document positive activities that reflect Islamic character and the progress of the madrasah. Society today evaluates educational institutions not only based on academic achievements but also on how they present themselves in the digital space.*" The explanation from the principal indicates an institutional awareness of the importance of digital branding to build public trust. The result of the interview with the Social Media Manager Teacher (Mrs. R), she stated "*We regularly upload documentation of student activities, especially religious activities, competitions, and achievements. Indeed, we do not yet have a special design team, so we are still learning to create engaging content. But thank God, many have responded positively, and there are even parents who registered after seeing our Instagram account.*" This interview confirms the observation results that content management is carried out consistently, although still technically limited, it has already had a positive impact.

The result of the interview with a 9th-grade student (AFN), she said "*I am happy when my activities are posted on the school's Instagram. Friends also become more enthusiastic when*

there is documentation of activities. We feel proud because our school looks active and cool on social media." Students' statements indicate that social media also serves as a motivational tool and an identity reinforcement for students, aligned with the strategic role of internal branding. The result of the interview with the student's parent (Mr. Khairul Azmi), he stated: "*I follow all the school's social media accounts, and I feel closer to my child's activities. I also stay updated on the school's progress without having to be there in person. I even recommend this school to relatives because its posts are positive and convincing.*" The response from parents reinforces the observation that social media has increased information transparency and strengthened public trust.

The result of the interview with the Alumni (Zahrani), she said "*I am proud to be an alumnus of MTs Al-Washliyah. When I see the school's posts now, I feel that the school is getting more advanced and active. I was also asked to provide a testimony, and that made me feel connected to the madrasa.*" Alumni testimonials show that the school's digital strategy not only builds image but also strengthens the community network between alumni and the school.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, it can be concluded that MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan has successfully implemented an active, consistent, and contextual social media-based marketing strategy in building the institution's positive image. The school utilizes digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp as a means to convey information, publicize student activities, and build interactive relationships with the public, especially the parents of students and prospective students. This strategy is implemented by presenting content that reflects Islamic values, discipline, and student achievements, packaged attractively through visualization and communicative narratives. The posts that attract public attention the most include documentation of student achievements, alumni testimonials, and innovative learning activities. This shows that the image of the madrasa as a religious yet progressive educational institution is becoming stronger in the eyes of the community.

Interviews with various parties support the results of the observation. The school principal shows a strong commitment to digital transformation, social media managing teachers explain the processes and technical challenges faced, while students feel motivated because their existence is appreciated through social media. Parents appreciate the transparency of information, and alumni feel emotionally connected to the school. Nevertheless, limitations in human resources and technical skills remain a challenge, especially in managing content more professionally. However, the collaborative spirit between teachers and students is the main strength that supports the sustainability of this strategy.

Overall, the social media-based marketing strategy applied has shown a positive impact on enhancing the institution's image, public engagement, and the reach of school information, while also affirming the madrasa's ability to adapt to the

developments of the digital era without neglecting its Islamic identity. The findings of this research indicate that MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan has successfully managed an active, consistent, and culturally-religiously contextual social media-based marketing strategy, which has resulted in an improved positive image of the madrasa. This is in line with the view (Haque & Grace, 2024) which emphasizes that social media provides an interactive space between institutions and the public, making it very effective in shaping the perceptions and image of institutions digitally.

The utilization of platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp by MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 shows that the school is capable of choosing communication channels that are relevant and close to the daily lives of the community. This is reinforced by (Suhaedin & Ganefri, 2023) which states that schools that are active on social media have a higher competitive edge because the community values transparency, responsiveness, and closeness as added value in choosing educational institutions.

Visual content that reflects Islamic values, students' achievements, and positive activities is key in building the identity of the madrasah. Research by (Daroen & Nopita, 2024) strengthening that content with religious and cultural values can foster emotional loyalty among the community towards Islamic schools. Posts about achievements and testimonials from alumni also serve as a form of social proof, which according to (Noor & Nurvenda, 2023) is an important part of the community's decision-making process regarding a brand, including educational institutions. is an important part of the community's decision-making process regarding a brand, including educational institutions?

Interviews with the principal, teachers, students, parents, and alumni reflect the existence of synergy and collective participation in the madrasah's digital strategy. These findings are in line with studies. (Hartini & Noorhafizah, 2024) which emphasizes the importance of collaboration among school elements in building a digital-based institutional image. Student participation in documenting activities, as found in this research, reflects the strategy of student-generated content which is also studied by (Wakhidah & Nina, 2024) as an effective approach to enhance internal and external engagement of the school.

The limitations in graphic design and technical content experienced by the madrasah management team indicate the need for educational digital literacy, as suggested by (Salma Oktavina, 2025) that the success of social media strategies in schools not only depends on the platforms used but also on the skills of the content managers. Therefore, improving teachers' competencies in the field of educational digital marketing has become an urgent necessity.

The social media strategy implemented by the madrasah also serves as a form of value-based institutional branding, as studied by (Nurrachma & Shaluhiyah, 2024) that madrasahs can progressively portray themselves while maintaining their Islamic

identity through directed digital narratives. This finding confirms that the Islamic image is not contrary to modernity, but rather can strengthen each other if packaged in an appropriate communication strategy. Furthermore, the existence of madrasahs in the digital space also expands access to information and public reach, as emphasized in the research. (Melkisedek & Neonane, 2025) which states that social media is not only a promotional tool, but also becomes a medium of transparency and strengthening the relationship between schools and the community.

In terms of its influence on public perception, these findings show that social media is able to shape the image of schools as institutions that are open, progressive, and trustworthy. This is supported by research. (Fitriani, 2024) which found that the positive perception of the community towards schools is strongly correlated with how schools present themselves digitally. In general, this discussion shows that the practices carried out by MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan reflect the effective implementation of Islamic education communication strategies in the digital era, as formulated by (Udayana, 2024) within the framework of institutional communication based on religious and social values.

This finding is also in line with studies conducted in public or non-Muslim schools. (Budiyatmo & Iriani, 2022) shows that social media not only strengthens the relationship between schools and the community, but also expands opportunities for social learning and shapes the image of educational institutions that are responsive to the needs of the times. In the context of public schools in the United States, (Muthiah, 2024) to find that the strategic use of social platforms contributes to the increase of public trust and the perception of professionalism of institutions, especially when the displayed content prioritizes values of inclusion, student success, and community participation.

Visual content that contains Islamic narratives, moral values, and achievements in madrasahs also has a similar effect to student-centered branding in public schools. This is in line with the findings. (Umbara, 2021) which shows that student-generated content enhances emotional engagement both from within and outside the school community, strengthens institutional identity, and builds loyalty.

It has been concluded that MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan has successfully implemented an active and consistent social media-based marketing strategy to build a positive image of the institution. Through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, the school has been able to communicate information, showcase student activities, and establish closer communication with the community. The displayed content reflects Islamic values, student achievements, and other positive activities, giving the impression that the madrasa is a religious, progressive institution open to the development of the times. The active participation of teachers, students, parents, and alumni has become the main strength in reinforcing this image. Findings indicate that social media is not only a promotional tool but also a means of building

institutional identity and enhancing public trust. Despite still having technical limitations, this strategy has had a real impact on increasing public engagement and interest among potential students.

Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media-Based Marketing

Based on the observations carried out at MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan, it was found that the implementation of a social media-based marketing strategy brings several strategic opportunities as well as challenges that need to be seriously addressed by the school. From the perspective of opportunities, the presence of social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp serve as effective tools for conveying information and building more open communication with the public. The school can utilize social media to introduce its identity, strengths, and student activities to the wider community without having to rely on conventional promotion. The use of social media also opens up space for public participation, especially from parents and alumni, who can interact directly with the school through comment sections, messages, or content sharing. The positive response of the community to the school's posts shows that social media plays a significant role in shaping the image of madrasahs as educational institutions that are active, religious, and adaptive to the times.

In addition, social media allows schools to reach a wider audience of prospective students, even from outside the local area. Information presented visually and narratively has proven to be more easily accepted and engaging. This opens up opportunities to increase the number of applicants while also strengthening the school's reputation in the digital realm. However, on the challenges side, several obstacles have been found in the implementation of this strategy. One of them is the limited human resources managing the school's social media. Account management is generally still done by teachers who have limited time, design skills, and understanding of digital marketing strategies. This condition leads to a lack of content variety, delays in uploads, and the absence of structured promotional planning. The limitations of facilities such as documentation devices, unstable internet connections, and minimal technical training are also significant obstacles. Social media management remains reactive and has not yet been fully data-driven or evaluative, which means that content strategies have not been directed towards specific target audiences. This aligns with the interview results to strengthen the challenges and opportunities of school-based social media marketing.

The result of the interview with the Principal (Mr. Z), he said "*We see social media as a great opportunity to introduce the madrasah to the wider community. Many prospective students first learned about this school from Instagram. However, we realize our limitations, especially in terms of manpower and skills to create truly engaging content.*" This statement shows that the school has an awareness of the importance of social media in shaping the institution's image, but also acknowledges the challenges in its management.

The result of the interview with the Social Media Manager Teacher (Mrs. R), she stated "*We try to actively upload student activities every week, but since our main task is teaching, sometimes the content is not published on time. In addition, we do not yet have design skills, so the appearance is still simple. But so far, many parents and alumni have shown appreciation.*" This interview reinforces the observation that time constraints and technical abilities are the main challenges, although efforts to remain consistent are still being made.

The results of the interview with a 9th-grade student (AFN), she stated "*If our activities are posted on the school's Instagram, we become more enthusiastic. But sometimes there are great activities that aren't uploaded because there's no time to document them. We actually want to help too, but there hasn't been a specific task for that.*" This student's statement indicates that social media serves as a motivator, but it has not yet fully engaged students as part of the school's content creation team.

The result of the interview with the student's parent (Mr. KA), he stated: "*I am happy to see the school postings because I feel like I know my child's activities. But sometimes I notice that there are rarely updates, so I do not know what programs are currently being run. If it could be more regular, it would definitely be better.*" The input from parents indicates that the public expects consistency and order in the management of social media as the main source of information from the school.

The result of the interview with the Alumni (Z), she said "*I am proud that my school is now active on social media. But I see there isn't much content discussing alumni. In fact, testimonials from alumni can also be an attraction. I think the opportunities are great if the school takes content management more seriously.*" Alumni provide perspectives on opportunities that have not been maximized, especially in making alumni a part of the school's branding and promotion strategy.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, it can be concluded that social media-based marketing strategies at MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan have great potential but also face significant challenges. In terms of opportunities, social media has proven effective in delivering information, building open communication with the public, and strengthening the positive image of the madrasah as an active, religious, and adaptive educational institution. Social media also widens the promotional reach, allowing the madrasah to attract prospective students from various backgrounds and regions. Additionally, the participation of parents, students, and alumni through digital interactions becomes an important asset in building public engagement and loyalty to the school.

However, from the perspective of challenges, schools still face limitations in terms of human resources, technical skills, supporting equipment, and structured content planning. Social media management is mostly carried out by teachers who have

primary responsibilities as educators, thus the time, creativity, and marketing strategies are not yet fully optimal. The limitations in documentation and the lack of formal involvement of students as part of the creative team also lead to several content potentials not being well documented. All interview informants demonstrated awareness of the importance of social media in shaping the image and public trust in madrasahs. However, to enhance the effectiveness of this strategy, concrete steps are needed in the form of technical training, the formation of a more organized social media team, and more strategic and participatory long-term content planning.

Research findings indicate that the social media-based marketing strategy implemented by MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan opens significant opportunities in shaping the positive image of the educational institution, increasing public participation, and expanding the reach of information. This result is in line with research by (Agatha & Salsabila, 2023) which states that social media is not only a communication tool but also a strategic means to build identity and public trust towards institutions.

The utilization of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp as communication and promotion media shows that the madrasah is capable of adapting to digital developments. (Ambarwati & Gunawan, 2025) emphasizes that Islamic educational institutions that are active in sharing religious activities, student achievements, and interactions with the public through social media will be more trusted and chosen by the digital-minded modern society.

This digital marketing strategy also strengthens the function of the madrasah as an inclusive and communicative institution. (Setiyati & Tarmam, 2024) emphasizes that social media allows schools to establish two-way communication with educational stakeholders quickly and efficiently. This is evident in the results of interviews with parents of students who feel more connected to school activities through social media posts.

However, on the other hand, the findings also indicate that the challenges of content management remain a serious obstacle, particularly related to limited human resources, technical capabilities, and strategic planning. (Elanda & Rizki, 2025) It is noted that schools that do not have a dedicated team for managing social media will struggle to maintain the consistency and quality of their content, making their digital promotion efforts less effective.

The statement from social media management teachers who experience difficulties in design and management time indicates a need for training and the formation of a creative digital team. This is in line with the findings. (Haque & Grace, 2024) that teacher digital literacy is a key factor in the success of school marketing in the 4.0 era. Without support for training and technical assistance, this strategy will not run optimally.

Furthermore, the lack of documentation of activities and the systematic involvement of students have also become obstacles in content production. In fact, according to (Felik & Manggu, 2024), Student involvement in the content creation process can enhance the sense of belonging and strengthen the school's identity from within. This simultaneously builds an authentic and participatory branding.

From the perspective of institutional branding, the research (Devi & Mahardhika, 2025) It states that educational institutions must be able to formulate messages that align with the core values of the school, such as religiosity, integrity, and achievement. In this regard, MTs Al-Washliyah has showcased content that reflects a progressive Islamic character, but it needs to be directed more strategically with a planned marketing communication approach.

The participation of alumni and parents in digital interactions also shows the potential to strengthen community networks, which impacts long-term reputation. (Sari & Syaddam, 2025) finding that the success of school promotions on social media greatly depends on public support that feels emotionally and informationally involved in each post.

Social media-based marketing strategies at MTs Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan show patterns and dynamics that are not only typical of Islamic educational institutions but also align with general trends in global educational institutions. Research by (Hoxhaj & Xhani, 2023) In the context of secondary education in Norway, it shows that the use of social media by schools can enhance school branding, student engagement, and broaden public participation. Social media is viewed not only as a promotional tool but also as a means to build trust and foster more humanistic communication between schools and the community.

Another study by (Li, Larimo, & Leonidou, 2023) emphasizes that schools in developed countries use digital platforms as part of their strategy to build a public narrative, namely how schools tell their story to the outside world. This narrative becomes an important instrument to create a strong, attractive, and adaptive institutional identity in response to social changes.

In the context of the United States, (Cingillioglu & Prokhorov, 2024) It was found that schools that successfully integrate digital strategies through social media tend to see an increase in the number of applicants, especially because parents find it easier to access information and assess the suitability of schools with their family values. The openness and emotional connection built through social media content become indicators of trust and long-term loyalty.

Finally, if the management of the madrasah's social media is carried out professionally, data-based, and planned, then the institution can position itself not only as a religious institution but also as a modern institution that is relevant to the

times. As concluded by (Lailiyah, 2023), Schools that are able to build a strong digital narrative will find it easier to attract public interest and enhance institutional competitiveness.

The implementation of social media-based marketing strategies at MTS Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan shows great potential in building a positive image of the madrasah in the community. Social media has become an effective means of disseminating information, strengthening communication with the public, and displaying the institution's identity as an active, modern, and accomplished Islamic school. Through engaging content, such as documentation of student activities, achievements, and alumni testimonials, the madrasah has successfully built engagement and trust from the wider community. However, behind these opportunities, there are several challenges that need to be addressed. The management of social media still relies on teachers with limited time and technical skills, as well as a lack of structured content planning. In addition, the limitations of facilities and the lack of active student involvement in content production also pose obstacles to the development of optimal digital strategies. This strategy has great potential for further development, as long as the madrasah can strengthen human resources, consistently plan content, and build broader cooperation with various parties, including students and alumni. Continuous efforts in social media management will encourage the improvement of the image, trust, and competitiveness of Islamic educational institutions in the digital era.

D. Conclusions

This research shows that the social media-based marketing strategy implemented by MTS Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan significantly contributes to shaping a positive image of the institution in the eyes of the public, especially among the urban middle class. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp are utilized to convey educational information, showcase religious and academic activities, and build an authentic and communicative Islamic narrative. Based on these findings, it is recommended that MTS Al-Washliyah Km 6 Medan continues to develop the capacity of its social media team professionally, including in aspects of graphic design, content management, and audience analysis. One of the training programs that can be implemented is the 'Content Design Workshop Using Canva' for teachers and staff, aimed at improving skills in creating attractive visual content that aligns with the institution's character. The institution also needs to establish collaborations with alumni, parents of students, and community leaders to expand the reach of positive messages conveyed through social media. The results of this research can be implemented in the form of internal policies at the madrasah related to branding and digital publication. The school can design a social media-based communication strategy guide that emphasizes the integrity of Islamic values, content creativity, and message consistency. Regular training in digital literacy must also be conducted continuously to strengthen the role of teachers as institutional promotion agents in the digital realm. However, this research has several limitations. First, the case study

approach that focuses on a single institution limits the generalization of findings to other madrasahs with different geographical or cultural contexts. Second, the analysis used is descriptive qualitative, making it impossible to quantitatively measure the impact of social media on the increase in the number of registrants or the level of community satisfaction. Third, the rapidly changing dynamics of social media algorithms pose a challenge in maintaining the long-term effectiveness of the strategies that have been developed. Therefore, further research is suggested to use a cross-cultural and comparative approach, such as comparing the effectiveness of social media strategies between madrasahs in urban and rural areas, to assess regional differences and develop a more adaptive and generalizable digital communication strategy model.

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