

The Effect of School Branding on the Reputation of Islamic Schools

Sofyan Rofi*
 Universitas Muhammadiyah of Jember
 sofyan.rofi@unmuhjember.ac.id

Dahani Kusumawati
 Universitas Bondowoso
 dahanikusumawati@yahoo.com

Abstract. The 21st Century demands as the basis of educational orientation have logical consequences on the competition among educational institutions, especially Islamic educational institutions in maintaining their existence. The style and characteristics of competition among Islamic educational institutions today are already different from the previous era, which were based on the low cost, while nowadays it becomes an irrelevant element. The ability to create educational customer segmentation is an essential factor developed by each Islamic educational institution. School branding strategies become a core domain by generating a competitive advantage based on the positive value to result in an output profile of each Islamic educational institution. This study aimed to see the effect of school branding activities on the reputation of Islamic schools. The research method used was a quantitative method with a case study as the research type. The research instrument was in the form of a questionnaire. The research respondents were coming from education customers, i.e. parents in each school, with a total of 116 respondents consisting of 47 respondents from SD Al-Furqan Jember and 69 respondents from SD Lukman Al-Hakim Jember as the location of research. The data analysis used was regression with a degree of freedom (DF) of 5%. The results of the study explained that school branding could significantly influence the reputation of Islamic schools. The component contributes significantly was the school output profile which became the main dimension to build the reputation of Islamic schools.

Keywords: school branding, reputation, Islamic school, competitiveness

INTRODUCTION

The competition among educational institutions (schools) becomes a phenomenon and reality which can be seen in this millennial era. The emergence of several concepts in the field of strategic management in education provides a new paradigm for school

management to be able to exist, survive and win the competition. This condition cannot be removed from the educational policy, which is increasingly developing towards an equal status. The emergence of the Accreditation Board, especially at the school level, has become a starting point for the reduction in distance or disparity in the private sector. The dynamics of consideration in selecting schools, somewhat no longer refer to the status of public or private schools, yet has shifted to the level of competitiveness and quality of schools.

The competition among schools is no longer trapped in a blind struggle toward the candidate of school customers (students) in the same region or area. The current competition is more about school competition in creating its own customer segmentation [1]-[3]. The creation of this customer segmentation cannot be separated from the visions, missions and school programs used for a brand image as a means to conduct school branding. It refers to the function of visions, missions and school programs as a means for socialization towards prospective users (students and parents) in introducing school profiles, so the prospective users have perspectives and considerations to determine their preferences.

The communication in illustrating the school profiles as a whole, interesting and having a bargaining power is part of the school branding process [4]. Branding is a process to provide a different positioning between one school and other schools which can offer the identification to prospective users (students and parents), so it can make a chain of commitments between users and educational managers, namely schools [5]. The process conducted by schools in this implementation is socializing the school achievements, school programs, superior curriculum, and quality learning services and so on.

Islamic schools, with their different or distinctive characteristics, provide their own potential in the process of school branding. The curriculum model, learning and local wisdom schools in education services provide a dimension of its own excellence for the school marketing process. The context of the term school marketing is the occurrence of paradigm

changes in the management of educational institutions to the format of education services, so the current education cannot be separated from these activities.

School branding activities in Islamic schools cannot be separated from the paradigm shift of modern education, from conventional and traditional management towards modern school management. The development of Islamic schools in Indonesia can be observed in the context of the curriculum development, from the concept of full day school to boarding school such as Muhammadiyah Boarding School (MBS), Tazkia International Islamic Boarding School (IIBS), AL-Azhar Yogyakarta, Fitrah Islamic World Academy Bogor, Islamic education institution of Al-Irsyad and PP Darussalam Gontor as the initiator of Islamic boarding school with a modern style.

The shifts of Islamic schools to the modern Islamic education models cannot be separated from the noble purpose of education itself. There is a shift of educational paradigm from the transfer of knowledge process based on cognitive competence to character education. The Islamic schools are no longer trapped in the single cognitive dimension as the orientation but rather refers to the identity of Islamic education as a process to develop human potential in terms of *kaffah* as a leader or *khalifah* who brings *rahmatan lil alamin* [6], [7].

The importance of school branding as a process to build a reputation and image of an Islamic school cannot be removed from the competitive advantage dimension being faced. School reputation also cannot be released from the dimension of loyalty attaching to the education customers, which is characterized by satisfaction [8]. Thus, reality can build the school's image [9]. The school's image construction built upon the dimension of its reputation has become the main capital for implementing school branding effectively and efficiently. The implementation of school branding has become a necessity to always refer to the philosophy of continues quality improvement as a basis in establishing the quality of education.

The implementation of school branding also cannot be separated from the policy and strategy conducted by the school. The right policy and strategy can provide stimulus in establishing the perspective of education customers, namely students and parents. Based on the description, the implementation of school branding in establishing the reputation of Islamic school must refer to the strength and potential owned, which is the school resources themselves. A random or unorganized implementation of school branding will have a fatal impact on the weakening of the trust level in the school itself.

The development and improvement of the Islamic schools' competitiveness, especially in Jember Regency, indicate good progress, even not as a whole. In spite of significant and not directly, the condition can interfere with the dominations of public schools in student recruitment and academic achievement. Some Islamic schools which can be the main option for students and parents in Jember are SD Al-Furqon, SD Al-Amin, SD Muhammadiyah Jember, SD Lukman Al-Hakim, SD Al-Isryad. By means of the student admission registration indicator, which has a booking system and based on the number of students become an indicator of a high level of competitiveness.

According to the description, it can be defined that the competitive advantage established by Islamic school management indicates good and satisfying performance. Those schools are capable of translating the customers' desire, i.e. the parents and students, as a basic component for conducting school branding in establishing its reputation. The implementation of school branding in establishing the Islamic school reputation surely cannot be separated from the strategy used by the school management in its implementation. The strategy determination applied by the school is not simple and unassuming. The fact refers to the brand or identity carried by these schools with the same typology as Islamic schools. Even with the same brand or identity, these schools are capable of building their own customers segmentation without reducing the costs which have been considered as the main dimensions in building competitive advantage.

These schools are able to make the low cost becomes an irrelevant component in conducting school branding to establish their reputation. This reality explains that establishing school branding cannot be separated from those processes since it is closely related to the customer loyalty indicators influenced by satisfaction factors [10]. Based on the description, this research has an interesting focus to be reviewed more in-depth, so there will be some crucial aspects and strategies found and are used by these Islamic schools in emphasizing and strengthening their level of competitiveness. The formulation of the problem in this research is to find out how the influence of branding school on the Islamic schools' reputation.

METHOD

This research used a quantitative approach with a case of study method. The research instrument was in the form of a questionnaire, while the research respondents were coming from education customers, i.e. parents in each school, with a total of 116 respondents consisting of 47 respondents from SD

Al-Furqan Jember and 69 respondents from SD Lukman Al-Hakim Jember.

This research took place in some schools in Jember Regency. These two Islamic schools selected to be the research sites were SD Al-Furqon Jember and SD Integral Luqman Al- Hakim Jember. Some things were taken into consideration in the selection of this research. Firstly, the applicable entrance fee or tuition fees in these schools were categorized as high. Secondly, the academic achievements of students' in each school, and thirdly, the class at each school was at least 2 classes at each level as a measure of interest. The research sample was 116, consisting of 47 samples from SD Al-Furqan Jember and 69 samples from SD Lukman Al-Hakim Jember. The data collection in this research applied a questionnaire. The data analysis technique used in this research was applying regression analysis with a degree of freedom (DF) of 5%.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The findings of this research on the influence of branding school towards the Islamic school reputation were divided into two types based on the research sites, namely SD Al-Furqon Jember and SD Integral Luqman Al- Hakim Jember. The analysis findings of the influence of school branding on the Islamic school reputation at SD Al-Furqon was obtained 47 questionnaires representing the outlook of customers (parents). According to the data processing from SD Al-Furqon questionnaire, the regression equation gained was $\text{reputation} = 19.1 + 0.434 \text{ branding}$, with a P-value on the constants of 0.000, which meant significant, P-value on the branding of 0.016 which meant less than alpha, so it could be concluded that it was significant and represented the population. The analysis result of variance output was a P-value of 0.016, so it could be concluded that the regression linear analysis was significant. R-Square value of 12.3 indicated that the reputation variable was influenced by school branding, while the remaining 87.7% was influenced by other variables. The results of data processing output can be seen in Figure 1.

The research data processing with sample sources from SD Integral Lukman Al-Hakim was 69 questionnaires representing the customers' outlook (parents). It can be described that the branding variable influences on the school reputation. The results of the regression equation from data processing indicated that $\text{Reputation} = 18.4 + 0.389 \text{ Branding}$, with a P-value on constants and branding of 0.000, which was significant and it was presumed to represent the population. Based on the data analysis results of variance output, the P-value was 0.000, and it indicated the regression linear equation

was influentially significant. The R-Square value of 17.5% meant that the school reputation at SD Integral Lukman Al-Hakim was influenced by branding, while 82.5% was influenced by other non-observed variables. The results of data processing in detail can be seen in Figure 2.

The regression equation is
 $\text{Reputation} = 19,1 + 0,434 \text{ Branding}$

Predictor	Coef	SE Coef	T	P
Constant	19,139	5,045	3,79	0,000
Branding	0,4339	0,1727	2,51	0,016

S = 4,08781 R-Sq = 12,3% R-Sq(adj) = 10,3%

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	1	105,44	105,44	6,31	0,016
Residual Error	45	751,96	16,71		
Total	46	857,40			

Figure 1. The results of data processing output at SD Al-Furqon.

The regression equation is
 $\text{Reputation} = 18,4 + 0,389 \text{ Branding}$

Predictor	Coef	SE Coef	T	P
Constant	18,418	3,455	5,33	0,000
Branding	0,3887	0,1030	3,77	0,000

S = 3,75516 R-Sq = 17,5% R-Sq(adj) = 16,3%

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
Regression	1	200,87	200,87	14,24	0,000
Residual Error	67	944,78	14,10		
Total	68	1145,65			

Figure 2. The results of data processing at SD Integral Lukman Al-Hakim.

Based on the description, it can be concluded that the branding variable on the Islamic schools' reputation significantly influences. The total sample of 116 respondents coming from secondary customers, i.e. parents, generally have the same perspective or outlook, that school branding is able to make a strong commitment in decision making to determine a school. According to the context, the branding strategy needs to be implemented based on the strengths or achievements of the school, so it can provide an attraction in improving the competitiveness of Islamic school's reputation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings elaborated in this research, it can be concluded that the branding variable significantly influenced the reputation of Islamic

schools. The entire samples of 116 respondents were secondary customers – parents who had the same perspective in general that school branding is able to persuade a strong commitment to decision making to determine their school preference. Regarding this context, the branding strategy needs to be implemented based on schools' strengths or achievements, so as it can provide an attraction in increasing the competitiveness of Islamic school's reputation.

REFERENCES

- [1] W. C.,Kim, & R. Mauborgne, Blue ocean strategy: From theory to practice. *California Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41166308>, 2015.
- [2] W. C.,Kim, & R. Mauborgne, Blue Ocean Strategy Blue Ocean Strategy. *Management*, 2014.
- [3] A. Mebert, & S. Lowe, *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space And Make Competition Irrelevant. Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space And Make Competition Irrelevant*. Taylor and Francis, 2017.
- [4] M. J. Hatch, The pragmatics of branding: An application of Dewey's theory of aesthetic expression. *European Journal of Marketing*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090561211230043>, 2012.
- [5] K. L.,Keller, & D. R.Lehmann, Brands and branding: Research findings and future priorities. *Marketing Science*, 25(6), 740–759. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.1050.0153>, 2016.
- [6] H. Hayat, Pendidikan Islam dalam konsep prophetic intelligence. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*. 2014.
- [7] A. May, Melacak Peranan Tujuan Pendidikan dalam Perspektif Islam. *TSAQAFAH*. <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v1i12.266>, 2015.
- [8] K. Skallerud, School reputation and its relation to parents' satisfaction and loyalty. *International Journal of Educational Management*. 2011.
- [9] M. Gotsi, & A.M. Wilson, Corporate reputation: Seeking a definition. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280110381189>, 2009.
- [10] K. Skallerud, School reputation and its relation to parents' satisfaction and loyalty. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 2011.